

# VIRGIL ON THE NATURE OF THINGS

*The Georgics, Lucretius and the Didactic Tradition*

---



M O N I C A R . G A L E

This page intentionally left blank

The *Georgics* has for more than twenty years been a source of fierce controversy among scholars of Latin literature. Is the work optimistic or pessimistic, pro- or anti-Augustan? Should we read it as a eulogy or a bitter critique of Rome and her imperial ambitions? This book suggests that the ambiguity of the poem is the product of a complex and thorough-going engagement with earlier writers in the didactic tradition: Hesiod, Aratus and – above all – Lucretius. Drawing on both traditional, philological approaches to allusion, and modern theories of intertextuality, Monica Gale shows how the world-views of the earlier poets are subjected to scrutiny and brought into conflict with each other. Detailed consideration of verbal parallels and of Lucretian themes, imagery and structural patterns in the *Georgics* forms the basis for a reading of Virgil's poem as an extended meditation on the relations between the individual and society, the gods and the natural environment.

MONICA GALE is a Lecturer in Classics at Trinity College, Dublin. She is the author of *Myth and Poetry in Lucretius* (1994).



VIRGIL ON  
THE NATURE OF  
THINGS

The *Georgics*, Lucretius and  
the Didactic Tradition

Monica R. Gale  
Trinity College, Dublin



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK  
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain  
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Monica R. Gale 2004

First published in printed format 2000

ISBN 0-511-03071-1 eBook (Adobe Reader)

ISBN 0-521-78111-6 hardback

for my parents

*qui potuerunt rerum cognoscere causas*

I am wary of the words pessimism and optimism.  
A novel does not assert anything; a novel  
searches and poses questions.

MILAN KUNDERA



# CONTENTS

*Preface* ix

*List of abbreviations* xiii

- 1 Introduction: influence, allusion, intertextuality 1
- 2 Beginnings and endings 18
- 3 The gods, the farmer and the natural world 58
- 4 Virgil's metamorphoses: mythological allusions 113
- 5 *Labor improbus* 143
- 6 The wonders of the natural world 196
- 7 The cosmic battlefield: warfare and military imagery 232
- 8 Epilogue: the philosopher and the farmer 270

*Bibliography* 275

*Index of passages cited* 288

*General index* 314



## PREFACE

It is now some twenty years since Michael Putnam's influential study, *Virgil's Poem of the Earth*, first put forward the view that the *Georgics* is a profoundly gloomy work, a view which has dominated scholarly opinion (at least in the English-speaking world) ever since. Putnam himself speaks of the 'realism, graphic and largely pessimistic' with which the poet depicts the relationship between human beings and the world around them; the overt, agricultural subject-matter of the poem is, in his view, 'one grand trope for life itself'. Other critics have focussed their attention on the political stance of the poet, or the position he takes up with respect to the literary debates of his era; but the majority have followed Putnam in treating the didactic surface of the poem as a kind of façade, behind which the poet's true concerns lie concealed. There has been a prevailing tendency, too, to privilege certain sections of the text over others, in the attempt to construct a univocal 'message' from the shifting balance between the elements of light and darkness, panegyric and vituperation, comedy and tragedy, which make up the *Georgics* as a whole.

It is my contention that attempts to explain away the poem's ambiguities in this way are misconceived. While the work *admits of* either an optimistic or a pessimistic reading, it does not *enforce* either. It seems to me that what Milan Kundera says of the novel in my epigraph can equally be applied to the *Georgics*: Virgil 'does not assert anything', rather he 'searches and poses questions'. In what follows, I attempt to show how the poem engages dynamically with the entire didactic tradition. Virgil subjects the diverse world-views of his predecessors (particularly Hesiod, Aratus and Lucretius) to a searching scrutiny, without attempting to resolve their differences or even to favour particular aspects of one system or another. Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* is more frequently evoked, and informs the themes and structure of Virgil's poem more fully, than any

other work in the tradition; but that is not to say that the poem is consistently either pro- or anti-Epicurean in its outlook.

It is also misleading, I think, to describe Virgil's agricultural subject-matter as a metaphor or trope. Clearly, it makes no sense to treat the poem as a practical handbook; yet the poet seems to me to be no less (and no more) serious about his theme than Hesiod or Lucretius. Just as Hesiod's agricultural precepts are thoroughly intermeshed with his exhortations to work and piety, and just as Lucretius' account of the physical world is simultaneously a rejection of superstition and irrationality, so Virgil's picture of the Italian farmer and his world naturally broadens out into wider reflexions on philosophical, theological and political themes. For the Roman reader, the farmer embodied a very particular set of ideals: honest and unstinting toil, old-fashioned piety, the toughness and natural justice which made Rome great. Naturally, then, these themes too are central to Virgil's poem.

The simple piety traditionally associated with rural life also constitutes an obvious and immediate point of contact – and conflict – with Lucretius. The *DRN* has two explicit aims: to free the reader from the fear of death, and to combat superstition and irrationality. For Lucretius, both traditional Roman religion and the more sophisticated philosophical theologies of the Stoics and others fall squarely under the latter heading. Hence, the nature of the gods and their relationship with human beings and the world as a whole are central both to Virgil's poem and to my reading of it (chapters 3 and 4).

My first two chapters set out the groundwork for this interpretation, looking first at some questions of theory and critical practice, and then examining the framework of proems and finales which – I suggest – invite the reader to view the poem as a whole as a response to the *DRN*. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 consider further areas of engagement between the two poems and their didactic predecessors. Lucretius promises to free his reader from toil (*labor*) and anxiety, firmly rejects the idea that any phenomenon can be attributed to supernatural causes, and portrays serenity and freedom from conflict as the ultimate goals of human life. In response to each of these propositions, Virgil points to tensions in Lucretius' use of imagery and his rhetorical strategies, and (so to speak) stages a series of confrontations between Hesiodic, Aratean, Lucretian and traditional Roman ideals. Chapter 5 looks at the theme of *labor*, which is common to Hesiod and Lucretius, though handled very differently by each; chapter 6 considers Virgil's treatment of the marvellous and supernatural; and chapter 7

examines the theme of warfare, which is prominent on both a literal and a metaphorical level in both the *Georgics* and the *DRN*.

Quotations from the *Georgics* and the *DRN* are taken from the Oxford Classical Texts of R. A. B. Mynors (1969) and C. Bailey (2nd edition, 1922) respectively. All translations are my own.

Several important books devoted wholly or partly to the *Georgics* have appeared in print in the last twelve months, after the present work was effectively complete. I have been unable to take full account of their conclusions, and confine myself here to indicating some areas of agreement and divergence. Stephanie Nelson's *God and the Land: The Metaphysics of Farming in Hesiod and Vergil* (Oxford, 1998) presents the *Georgics* as a poem of 'unresolved tensions', contrasting it with the more unified world-view of Hesiod. Her reading of the poem has points of similarity with my own, particularly in her account (pp. 141–51) of books 3 and 4 as an exploration of tensions between individual and community (without reference to Lucretius, however). Robert Cramer, Richard Jenkyns and Llewelyn Morgan all present essentially 'optimist' readings of the poem. Cramer (*Vergils Weltsicht: Optimismus und Pessimismus in Vergils Georgica* (Berlin and New York, 1998)) offers a moderately effective demolition of the 'pessimist' interpretations of Ross (1987) and Thomas (1988); but his own view of the poem arguably involves equally arbitrary assumptions (particularly in textual matters). Jenkyns devotes four chapters of his *Virgil's Experience: Nature and History; Times, Names, and Places* (Oxford, 1998) to the *Georgics* and Lucretius; his discussion of Lucretius' concept of natural law and Virgil's use of *adynata* anticipates some of the points that I make in chapter 6. It will be evident, however, that I cannot accept his view of the *Georgics* as essentially descriptive, nor his denial (p. 322) that Virgil is concerned with 'moral ideas'. Morgan's *Patterns of Redemption in Virgil's Georgics* (Cambridge, 1999), finally, presents a powerful defence of the old theory that the poem is essentially a work of pro-Augustan propaganda; again, while I remain unconvinced by the view that suffering and violence are consistently portrayed by Virgil as ultimately 'constructive', there are several points of overlap between Morgan's discussion and my own, particularly on the issue of animal sacrifice (pp. 105–49 and the concluding section of my chapter 3).

The research on which the present work is based was begun at Newcastle University, where I held a Sir James Knott Research Fellowship in

1992–3; the completion of the book was facilitated by two terms' research leave, partly funded by the Humanities Research Board of the British Academy, in 1996–7. I am indebted to both institutions for their support. I am grateful also to the officers of the Cambridge Philological Society and the Virgil Society for permission to reprint parts of chapters 3 and 4 (which appeared in *PCPS* 41 (1995) under the title 'Virgil's metamorphoses: myth and allusion in the *Georgics*') and chapter 7 (an earlier version of which was published as 'War in Lucretius and the *Georgics*' in *PVS* 23 (1998)).

It is a pleasure to thank the many friends and colleagues who have generously offered their help, advice and encouragement. My colleagues at Royal Holloway, London and Trinity College, Dublin provided a congenial and stimulating working environment. Philip Hardie and Michael Reeve read the entire book in draft; their comments, criticisms and suggestions were invaluable at the revision stage. I am also grateful to Susanna Morton Braund, Adrian Hollis, Andrew Laird, Steve Linley and David Scourfield for comments on different parts of the books at various stages of composition. Last, but most of all, I would like to thank David, for his encouragement and moral support (and for thinking up the title) as well as his critical acumen; and my parents, who never told me to stop asking questions. To them, with gratitude and love, this book is dedicated.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>EV</i>	F. Della Corte, <i>Enciclopedia Virgiliana</i> (Rome, 1984–91)
LSJ	H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, rev. by H. S. Jones and R. Mackenzie, <i>A Greek–English Lexicon</i> (9th edn, Oxford, 1996)
Mynors	R. A. B. Mynors, <i>Virgil: Georgics</i> (Oxford, 1990)
<i>OLD</i>	<i>The Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> (Oxford, 1968)
<i>RE</i>	A. Pauly and G. Wissowa, <i>Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (Stuttgart, 1894– )
<i>SH</i>	H. Lloyd-Jones and P. J. Parsons, <i>Supplementum Hellenisticum</i> (Berlin, 1983)
<i>SVF</i>	H. von Arnim, <i>Stoicorum veterum fragmenta</i> (Leipzig, 1903–24)
Thomas	R. F. Thomas, <i>Virgil: Georgics</i> (Cambridge, 1988)
<i>TLL</i>	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae</i> (Leipzig, 1900– )

Abbreviations for journal titles generally follow the system used in *L'Année Philologique*; lists of standard abbreviations for classical authors and works can be found in LSJ and the *OLD*.





*Introduction: influence, allusion,  
intertextuality*

What kind of poem is Virgil's *Georgics*? This question has been answered – and indeed posed – in a surprising variety of ways by scholars and critics during the course of the twentieth century. Since the 1960s, debate has revolved particularly around the poet's political stance, and the related issue of the optimism or pessimism of his outlook. Should we see the *Georgics* as offering whole-hearted support to the nascent regime of Augustus, or is the poem in some way subtly subversive? How does the poet portray the relationship between the individual and society, or between human beings, the gods and the natural world? More recently, the focus of critical attention has begun to shift towards Virgil's relationship with the didactic tradition. In what sense can we regard the *Georgics* as an *Ascraeum carmen* ('Hesiodic song', 2.176)? Is Virgil's self-proclaimed affinity with Hesiod actually a red herring, which has diverted attention from closer parallels with the self-consciously learned and elegant verse handbooks of Aratus and Nicander, or with Lucretian philosophical didactic? Is the poem 'really' about agriculture? What, if anything, is the poet trying to teach? What is the relationship between the passages of agricultural instruction and the so-called digressions? What are we to make of Virgil's (apparently) cavalier attitude to technical accuracy in his agricultural subject-matter? Does the didactic *praeceptor* contradict himself, and if so, why?

Most of these controversial questions will be addressed in the course of this study; but my principal concern will be the relationship between the *Georgics*, Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, and the didactic tradition as a whole. In this area, above all, we can trace a surprisingly broad spectrum of opinion, from Sellar's oft-quoted remarks on the exceptional degree of 'influence' exerted by Lucretius on 'the thought, composition and even the diction of the *Georgics*', through Wilkinson's straightforwardly biographical account of Virgil's enthusiastic reaction to the publication of

the *DRN*, to Thomas' assertion that the debt of Virgil to Lucretius in the *Georgics* is 'predominantly formal, consisting of the borrowing of phrases, or occasionally the rearranging of an appealing image'.<sup>1</sup>

It is notable that, while all three critics frame their accounts in terms of the traditional literary-historical concept of 'influence', they evaluate the significance and extent of this influence quite differently. Wilkinson (following Sellar's 'masterly' analysis) suggests that the impact of Lucretius' poem on the young Virgil was so great as to determine not only the form of the *Georgics* but also its themes and the world-view it embodies (even where Virgil's ideas must be seen as a reaction against Lucretius). Thomas' interpretation, on the other hand, is founded upon notions of allusive artistry: Virgil employs Lucretian (and Hesiodic) echoes as a means of validating his own status as didactic poet, and is more interested in defining his own position in literary history than in responding to the ethical or philosophical concerns of his didactic predecessors. He is, so to speak, a Callimachean poet in Lucretian clothing.

The diversity of opinion exemplified by these two extreme positions can, of course, be attributed in large measure to changing critical fashions. A clear line of development can be traced from the *Quellenforschung* of the late nineteenth century (notably the work of Jahn, who devotes detailed studies to Virgil's prose and verse sources and models in each of the four books of the *Georgics*),<sup>2</sup> to Wilkinson's biographical approach and the allied view – developed, for example, by Farrington – that Virgil should be seen as reacting against his Lucretian model.<sup>3</sup> Thomas' line of approach, on the other hand, goes back ultimately to Pasquali's conception of *arte allusiva*,<sup>4</sup> which gained in popularity during the 70s and 80s: Augustan poetry, in particular, is increasingly read in this tradition as self-conscious and self-reflexive, as concerned above all with poetics and with its own position in the literary canon.<sup>5</sup> In other respects, Thomas is the heir of the

<sup>1</sup> Sellar (1897), p. 199; Wilkinson (1969), pp. 63–5; Thomas (1988), vol. 1, p. 4. Thomas' attempt to play down Lucretius' importance as an intertext for the *Georgics* is regarded by many scholars as misguided or at least excessive (see e.g. Nisbet (1990)); but it is worth noting that several other recent studies (Ross (1987), Perkell (1989), Farrell (1991)) allow Lucretius only a relatively restricted role in their interpretations of the poem.

<sup>2</sup> Jahn (1903a, 1903b, 1904, 1905). <sup>3</sup> Farrington (1958, 1963); cf. Nethercut (1973).

<sup>4</sup> Pasquali (1951).

<sup>5</sup> Farrell (1991) similarly reads the *Georgics* primarily as an essay in literary history, though his discussion of the relationship between Virgil and Lucretius is more nuanced than Thomas' (Virgil's reaction to the *De Rerum Natura* is 'serious, reflective and carefully nuanced' (p. 179), and Lucretian echoes are used to register both similarities with and differences from Lucretius' world-view).

so-called Harvard school of Virgilian criticism, characterized by its employment of predominantly New Critical techniques with the fairly explicit agenda of uncovering hidden layers of meaning which subvert the superficially pro-Augustan surface of the poems.<sup>6</sup> (Critics of this school generally have surprisingly little to say about Virgil's use of Lucretius, although – as I argue especially in chapter 7 below – the latter can be seen as profoundly critical of contemporary political and imperialist ideology.) More recently still, a view has begun to emerge – again reflecting current critical trends – that we should not attempt to read the *Georgics* as an organically unified whole; on the contrary, the poem is characterized by the presence of unresolved contradictions. The different 'voices' of the text are, on this view, neither harmonized nor hierarchically organized (that is, none is finally privileged as 'the poet's true opinion'). Following this line of approach, it might be argued that Lucretius is of central importance in the interpretation of Virgil's poem, but that the *Georgics* is neither straightforwardly Lucretian ('influenced' by Lucretius, in Sellar's or Wilkinson's terms), nor simply a reaction against Lucretius ('revers[ing] the religious and moral content of the Lucretian world-picture while retaining the Lucretian vocabulary', as Farrington puts it).<sup>7</sup>

It will become clear in subsequent chapters that I have considerable sympathy with this last line of approach. Before embarking on yet another 'new reading' of the poem, however, it seems desirable to establish some theoretical preliminaries. The very diversity of previous interpretations of the poem raises some pressing questions. How can we decide between Sellar's view of Lucretian 'influence' on the *Georgics* as all-pervasive, and Thomas' assertion that resemblances between the two poems are largely confined to a superficial, formal level? How can we determine when linguistic and other similarities between two texts are significant and when they are not? To put it another way, how do we know what constitutes a 'real' allusion? And, even where the presence of an allusion is accepted, how can we decide how to evaluate it?

I have already drawn attention to the fact that – while very different in other ways – the interpretations of Wilkinson and Thomas are united in their reliance on the notion of 'influence'. Hence, both readings might be termed 'author-centred', in the sense that the critics understand their own

<sup>6</sup> See especially Putnam (1979) and Ross (1987).      <sup>7</sup> Farrington (1963), p. 91.

role as the recovery or reconstruction of the author's (more or less conscious) intentions. Within the parameters of this broad interpretative strategy, Virgil's relationship with earlier poets and their work can be understood in a number of different ways: Wilkinson sees Lucretius as a formative influence on Virgil's philosophical outlook and poetic technique; Thomas, on the other hand, reads the *Georgics* essentially as a response to Callimachean poetic ideals and to the contemporary political situation, while Lucretian echoes are self-consciously exploited to provide a generic framework; alternatively, Virgil might be seen as attempting to rival Lucretius (*aemulatio*), or as reacting against Lucretian ideas (*oppositio in imitando*).<sup>8</sup> This kind of approach is problematic for a number of reasons, not least of which is the difficulty of distinguishing 'genuine' allusions from casual similarities of expression, structure or technique which might be attributable merely to the authors' common cultural context or to generic propriety rather than to 'significant' influence by one author on another.<sup>9</sup>

One way of avoiding – or at least redefining – this problem is to regard allusion not as an indicator of the author's intention, but as something perceived and even, in a sense, created by the reader. On this view, anything perceived by a reader as an allusion would count as such. This is not to say that any text can mean absolutely anything at all, but it does entail the admission that a plurality of meanings will exist for any one text, and that there is no interpretation which will hold good for all readers at all times. On the other hand, it does seem to me that a fair degree of consensus can be reached amongst a readership which shares a common culture – that is, a readership familiar with the same range of potential intertexts and strategies of reading and interpretation.

As a general term to describe this process, I prefer 'intertextuality' to the more traditional 'allusion' or 'reference', for a number of reasons.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> For the terminology, see e.g. Farrell (1991), pp. 5–24; the phrase *oppositio in imitando* seems to have been coined by Giangrande (see Giangrande (1967), p. 85).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Clayton and Rothstein (1991b), esp. pp. 4f.: 'Concern with influence arose in conjunction with the mid-eighteenth-century interest in originality and genius, and the concept still bears the marks of that origin . . . Scholars worried throughout the twentieth century how to discriminate genuine influences from commonplace images, techniques, or ideas that could be found in almost any writer of a given period . . .'. For an attempt to establish criteria for distinguishing between 'genuine' allusions and accidental coincidences of phrasing, see Thomas (1986).

<sup>10</sup> The term was originally coined by Kristeva, who defines it as follows: 'Any text is a mosaic of quotations; any text is an absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least *double*' (Kristeva (1980), p. 66). It should be noted, however, that later theorists and critics have understood the term in rather different ways (see e.g. Worton and Still (1990), Plett (1991b), Van Erp Taalman Kip (1994)); Kristeva herself subsequently disclaimed her own coinage on

First, both 'allusion' and 'reference' presuppose the notion of authorial control of the text and its meaning; 'intertextuality' is a more neutral term, which avoids prejudging the question of agency. Secondly, 'intertextuality' suggests a broader phenomenon than the alternative terms. Where an allusion might be interpreted as something incidental to the meaning of a text (as – say – an acknowledgement of an earlier author's influence, or a display of erudition), intertextuality suggests something more fundamental.<sup>11</sup> The meaning of a text, on this view, is constituted by its relationship with earlier and contemporary texts; close resemblances of phrasing, structure, prosody etc. ('allusions' in the traditional sense) act as markers which draw the reader's attention to such relationships. In this sense, the identification of allusions is part of a broader process of intertextual interpretation, whereby the reader interacts with the text to produce meaning: while allusions can be meaningfully described as present in the text (whether or not consciously put there by the author), it is up to the reader to activate these allusions by identifying and interpreting intertextual resemblances.<sup>12</sup> We may, indeed, find it useful to con-

the grounds that it had been misappropriated as a synonym for source-criticism. While such 'abuse' of Kristeva's terminology is open to criticism (see e.g. Mai (1991), Laird (1999)), it has also been pointed out that there is considerable irony in the supposition that the word 'intertextuality' is itself subject to authorial control (Friedmann (1991); cf. Clayton and Rothstein (1991b), who point out that 'Kristeva's own development of the term "intertextuality" was itself a complex intertextual event, one that involved both inclusion and selectivity . . . Her dialogue with Bakhtin . . . was mediated by the texts of Derrida and Lacan, so that her account of Bakhtin as well as of semiotics was destabilized' (p. 18)). My use of the term, then, is not intended to suggest close adherence to Kristeva; while I recognize that intertextuality is inherent in all language (and still more in all texts), it seems to me that such an observation is not particularly helpful to the critic (cf., again, Clayton and Rothstein (1991b): 'Valuable as Barthes' account of intertextuality is for understanding the literary, it does not provide the critic with a particularly effective tool for analyzing literary texts' (pp. 22f.)). On the other hand, I do find the *term* intertextuality useful, for reasons I have set out above. To put it rather flippantly, I recognize that all texts are intertextual, but prefer to see some texts as more intertextual than others.

<sup>11</sup> Compare D. P. Fowler (1997), esp. pp. 15–18 (an admirably clear discussion of overlaps and distinctions between the terms 'allusion' and 'intertextuality').

<sup>12</sup> The process of 'activation' and interpretation is usefully discussed by Ben-Porat (1976), who defines literary allusion as 'a device for the simultaneous activation of two texts'; cf. also Hebel (1991) and Holthuis (1994). Conte (1986), pp. 38f. and 52–7 (cf. Barchiesi and Conte (1989)), suggests that allusion should be regarded as a rhetorical figure analogous to metaphor: 'The gap in figurative language that opens between letter and sense is also created in allusion between that which is said (as it first appears), a letter, and the thought evoked, the sense. And just as no figure exists until the reader becomes aware of figurative language, so too allusion comes into being only when the reader grasps that there is a gap between the immediate meaning . . . and the image that is its corollary' (p. 38). In these terms, allusion can be seen as an invitation to the reader to interpret the text *as* intertext, to read it *against* or *through* the text alluded to (cf. Worton and Still (1990), pp. 11f.).

ceptualize such resemblances in terms of an author's hypothetical intentions ('Virgil is accepting/challenging/subverting Lucretius' world-view'); but it should always be borne in mind that this is a kind of shorthand, and that the alluding author is ultimately a figure (re)constructed from the text by the reader.<sup>13</sup>

How, then, do we identify such allusive markers? How do we decide what is or is not an intertext for any particular text? On one level, this is not a meaningful question, since from the reader's point of view all texts are, so to speak, potentially mutual intertexts. On the other hand, though all texts are potentially interrelated, certain features (such as genre, contemporaneity and common themes) will tend to encourage us to compare some texts more readily than others. It is here that the identification of allusive markers comes into play.

A relatively obvious and unequivocal kind of allusive marker is the direct quotation. Where two authors employ identical phrasing, it is virtually inevitable that a reader who is sufficiently familiar with the source-text will identify a cross-reference. As Wills has persuasively argued in a recent study of repetition in Latin poetry, however, equally striking effects can be produced by almost any feature of diction, prosody, character or situation which creates a parallel between two (or more) texts.<sup>14</sup> The reader is particularly likely to detect allusion where the language is in some way 'marked': while poetic language in general is set apart from 'ordinary' speech, allusive language is 'set apart from poetic discourse, if only for a moment' (p. 17),<sup>15</sup> for example through the use of *hapax legomena* or other uncharacteristic vocabulary.<sup>16</sup> A striking example from the *Georgics* is Virgil's use of the adverb *divinitus* ('by divine agency')

<sup>13</sup> A point well argued by Hinds (1998), pp. 47–51. For this reason (amongst others) I have not attempted a rigorous exclusion of phrasing which might be taken to suggest authorial agency or intention. 'Virgil says' is too useful a shorthand for 'the text says' or 'the text suggests' to be conveniently abandoned.

<sup>14</sup> Wills (1996), pp. 15–41 (esp. 18–24). Unlike Wills, I have made no attempt to provide a *comprehensive* typology of allusive markers; the aim of my discussion is merely to draw attention to the range of ways in which Virgil's poem 'calls up' its Lucretian intertext.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. p. 41: 'allusion is the referential use of specifically marked language'.

<sup>16</sup> But linguistic idiosyncrasies of this kind need not be regarded as *essential* features of the intertextual marker: Hinds (1998), pp. 25–51 argues persuasively that 'there is no discursive element in a Roman poem, no matter how unremarkable in itself, and no matter how frequently repeated in the tradition, that cannot in some imaginable circumstance mobilize a specific allusion' (p. 26). Nothing *prevents* us from connecting the commonest *topos* with one or more specific passages, and other features of the alluding text (genre, narrative situation etc.) may actually encourage us to do so (cf. my discussion of *Geo.* 1.316–34 below).

in 1.415: the word is not only *hapax* in Virgil, but is generally rare in Latin poetry, with the exception of Lucretius, who uses it as kind of catch-word (it occurs eight times in the *DRN*).<sup>17</sup> A suitably qualified reader will thus immediately think of Lucretius. What happens next? On the view outlined above, the allusion acts as a marker, activating the Lucretian intertext. But it is up to the reader to decide how to interpret the relationship between the two texts. I argue in chapter 3 that the allusion can be seen as part of a ‘dialogue’ between different views of the relationship between gods, human beings and the natural world which runs through the whole poem, but is particularly prominent in book 1: Lucretius repeatedly uses the adverb *divinitus* in contexts where he is repudiating the idea of divine intervention in the world; but the Epicurean doctrine of divine indifference clashes with the way that the gods are depicted elsewhere in *Georgics* 1 and throughout the poem. Other readers might, of course, interpret the allusion in different ways, or even decide that it is of no significance at all; nevertheless, I would still maintain that the marker exists in the text, and has at least the potential to prompt interpretation.

Two further examples of direct quotation or close imitation, drawn from *Georgics* 3, illustrate some further ways in which allusive language may be marked. In 3.90, Virgil dignifies the mythical horses of Mars and Achilles with the phrase *quorum Grai meminere poetae* (‘of whom Greek poets have told’); a little later, the gadfly is described as *asper, acerba sonans* (‘fierce and angry-sounding’, 149). Both phrases are connected in several ways with Lucretian intertexts. In *DRN* 5.405, the myth of Phaethon is dismissed by Lucretius with the phrase *scilicet ut veteres Graium cecinere poetae* (‘so, at least, the old Greek poets sang’); and in 5.33, the phrase *asper, acerba tuens* (‘fierce and angry-looking’) is applied to the dragon of the Hesperides. In both cases, the Virgilian phrases echo not just Lucretius’ diction, but also the metrical position in the Lucretian lines; the former is also marked (like *divinitus* in 1.415) by the fact that it is a kind of formula in Lucretius (repeated with slight variations in 2.600 and 6.754). Thirdly, the Virgilian phrases are linked to their Lucretian intertext by similarities between the contexts: Virgil is discussing the *mythical* horses of Mars and Achilles and the *monstrous* gadfly (*hoc . . . monstro*, ‘this monster’, 152), Lucretius is dismissing the *myth* of Phaethon and comparing Hercules’ slaying of *monsters* (unfavourably) with Epicurus’ victory over the

<sup>17</sup> See pp. 83–6 below for further details and discussion.

passions. Once again, I see these similarities as allusive markers drawing attention to a broader dialogue between the two texts: Virgil's use of Lucretian phraseology can be seen here as opening up a gap between 'letter' and 'sense' (in Conte's terms)<sup>18</sup> which requires interpretation (Virgil appears in these two instances to be accepting at face value stories of metamorphosis and monstrosity, but in language which recalls Lucretius' rejection of just these kinds of myths).<sup>19</sup>

A fourth passage where intertextual interpretation is called for in a slightly different way is the so-called 'aetiology of *labor*', 1.118–46 (discussed in detail in chapter 3). This is a notoriously difficult and controversial passage: no two critics seem to agree on how positively (or negatively) we should read the evaluation of *labor* ('work', 'toil'), human progress and Jupiter's action in putting an end to the Golden Age. One way of thinking through these problems is to consider how the Golden Age is dealt with in other texts; hence, it may be that the very difficulty of reaching a coherent interpretation of Virgil's text in its own terms leads us beyond the words on the page to the complex series of intertexts which underlie this passage.<sup>20</sup>

A further (and final) way in which allusive passages may be marked is their position within the work. It is conventional in classical literature for the beginnings of both poems and prose works to be densely allusive, or, to put it another way, to establish intertextual links which will condition our reading of the work as a whole. Other strongly marked contexts are the middles and ends of works, and, more generally, any passage where the writer's aims, subject-matter or poetics are under discussion.

In the case of the *Georgics*, each of the four books begins and ends with a clearly demarcated section in which programmatic issues come to the fore. These proems and finales will be dealt with in detail in chapter 2. Here, I want to comment briefly on the finale to book 2 and the proem to book 3, which together form a central block dealing overtly with poetics and with the relationship between tradition and originality.

In 2.475, Virgil turns emphatically from reflexions on the idyllic life of the farmer to discuss his own poetic preferences: *me vero primum dulces ante*

<sup>18</sup> See n. 12 above. <sup>19</sup> See further pp. 125–7 below.

<sup>20</sup> Similarly, the oddity of Virgil's phrasing in 1.242f., where the south pole is said to lie 'beneath our feet', below the Styx and 'deep *Manes*', may in itself lead us to Lucretius' cosmic vision in the proem to *DRN* 3, where nothing prevents him from observing 'beneath [his] feet' the *non*-existence of Acheron (3.25–7).



*omnia Musae* . . . ('but as for me, may the Muses, sweeter than all else . . .'). He expresses the desire to write on natural-scientific themes, but reverts to the countryside as a second best option. Then follows the famous double *makarismos*:

felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas  
atque metus omnis et inexorabile fatum  
subiecit pedibus strepitumque Acherontis avari:  
fortunatus et ille deos qui novit agrestis  
Panaque Silvanumque senem Nymphasque sorores.

2.490–4

Happy the man who has been able to discover the causes of things, to trample underfoot every fear, and implacable fate, and the din of greedy Acheron. Fortunate too is he who knows the rustic gods, Pan and old Silvanus and the sister Nymphs.

*Makarismoi* of this kind need not, of course, have specific reference to a particular individual: in fact, they are more usually applied to groups (the language here particularly suggests the context of initiation into the mysteries, where happiness is commonly linked with mystical knowledge), and some critics have duly dismissed the idea that any specific identification can be made here.<sup>21</sup> Yet in such an overtly programmatic context, it is natural to assume that Virgil is referring to a particular poetic predecessor, and there is one obvious candidate. The list of topics for scientific poetry in 477–82 may already have brought Lucretius to mind;<sup>22</sup> and the language in lines 490–2 is reminiscent of several more or less programmatic passages in the *DRN*. The phrase *rerum cognoscere causas* ('to discover the causes of things') recalls two passages where Lucretius proclaims the need for philosophical understanding to combat fear of death and of the gods:

hoc se quisque modo fugit, at quem scilicet, ut fit,  
effugere haud potis est, ingratis haeret et odit  
propterea, morbi quia causam non tenet aeger;  
quam bene si videat, iam rebus quisque relictis  
naturam primum studeat *cognoscere rerum*.

3.1068–72

<sup>21</sup> For Virgil's use of vocabulary associated with initiation, see Buchheit (1972), pp. 72–4, Hardie (1986), pp. 39–42, and Mynors *ad* 490. Thomas (*ad* 490) rejects the view that the lines refer specifically to Lucretius (or to Lucretius and his Greek predecessors); for further references, see p. 43, n. 74 below.

<sup>22</sup> Most of the topics are in fact covered by Lucretius: for details, see p. 42, n. 71 below.

So each man flees himself, and yet, against his will, clings to and loathes the self that, naturally, he cannot escape; because he is sick, and does not grasp the cause of his disease. If he fully understood his plight, he would at once abandon all his other business and immediately devote himself to discovering the true nature of things.

praeterea caeli rationes ordine certo  
et varia annorum cernebant tempora verti  
nec poterant quibus id fieret *cognoscere causas*.  
ergo perfugium sibi habebant omnia divis  
tradere et illorum nutu facere omnia flecti. 5.1183–7

Besides, they observed the regular movements of the heavens and saw how the different seasons of the year came round, nor could they discover the causes that brought these things about. So they took refuge in handing everything over to the gods and attributing control of all things to their will.

Similarly, lines 491f. combine echoes of Lucretius' celebration of Epicurus' victory over superstition in the proem to *DRN* 1 and his statement of purpose in the proem to book 3:

quare religio *pedibus subiecta* vicissim  
obteritur, nos exaequat victoria caelo. 1.78f.

So religion in turn is crushed and trampled underfoot, and his victory raises us to the heavens.

animi natura videtur  
atque animae claranda meis iam versibus esse  
et *metus* ille foras praeceps *Acheruntis* agendus,  
funditus humanam qui vitam turbat ab imo  
omnia suffundens mortis nigrore neque ullam  
esse voluptatem liquidam puramque relinquit. 3.35–40

It seems, then, that I must make clear in my verses the nature of the mind and the soul, and drive that fear of Acheron headlong out of doors – the fear that troubles human life from its lowest depths, polluting all things with the blackness of death and leaving no pleasure clear and pure.

But if we take the first part of the *makarismos* as a reference to Lucretius and Epicurean rationalism, the second part becomes highly problematic. How can Virgil turn immediately from a declaration of his admiration for Lucretius' abolition of fear and fate to congratulate the man 'who knows

the rustic gods'? There is a very obvious contradiction here. Not only does Lucretius pour scorn on religion in general, but he specifically dismisses Pan and the nymphs as creations of rustic superstition (4.580–94). The passage as a whole seems to declare a dual allegiance to two incompatible world-views: Lucretian rationalism is juxtaposed with a nostalgic longing for simple rustic piety, more reminiscent of Hesiod.<sup>23</sup> The poet seems to identify himself more closely with the second option – not least because the *deos agrestis* ('rustic gods') are reminiscent of the *dique deaeque . . . studium quibus arva tueri* ('gods and goddesses whose pleasure is to watch over the fields') to whom Virgil appeals in the proem to book 1 – but this apparent preference must be balanced against the explicit characterization of rustic subjects as a second-best option in the preceding lines. Here, then, intertextuality leads us into a dilemma which lies at the heart of the poem in both a literal and a figurative sense. The two extremes of the didactic tradition (archaic, Hesiodic piety and Lucretian science) are brought together in such a way that the conflict between them is brought to the fore, not resolved. I will argue that this central, programmatic passage is emblematic of the poem as a whole: Virgil's problematic juxtaposition here of two incompatible world-views suggests a way of reading the *Georgics*, as a polyphonic text in which the different 'voices' of the didactic tradition are brought together but not harmonized into a seamless whole.

The proem to book 3 calls on a still broader range of intertexts, but here the effect is quite different. Virgil depicts himself in this passage as triumphing over earlier (specifically Greek) poetry, and bringing the Muses from Helicon to his native Mantua. The lines simultaneously proclaim and illustrate the poet's mastery of tradition: Virgil paradoxically celebrates his originality in language appropriated from Pindar, Callimachus, Ennius and – again – Lucretius.<sup>24</sup>

The central position of the passage is again important here. *Georgics* 3.1–48 is an example of what Conte has called the 'proem in the middle'.<sup>25</sup> Conte draws attention to a tradition in Latin poetry – exemplified both by this passage and by the proem to *DRN* 4 – where-

<sup>23</sup> Cf. especially Hesiod's closing *makarismos* in *Op.* 826f.: τᾶων εὐδαίμων τε καὶ ὄλβιος ὃς τᾶδε πάντα | εἰδὼς ἐργάζηται ἀνείτιος ἀθανάτοισιν ('Happy and blessed is the man who, knowing all these things, labours blamelessly in the sight of the immortal gods'). Again, the parallel position of the two passages at the end of Hesiod's poem and at the end of the first half of the *Georgics* suggests a link between them.

<sup>24</sup> On this 'very Roman paradox', cf. Hinds (1998), pp. 52–5. <sup>25</sup> Conte (1992).

by the central position in a work or poetic book is reserved for discussion of poetics. He argues that this tradition goes back – via Ennius' *Annales* – to Callimachus' *Victoria Berenices*, which stood as a kind of dedication at the central point of the *Aetia* (the beginning of book 3, as in the *Georgics*). Formally, the Callimachean passage is an epinician, celebrating a victory of the Alexandrian queen Berenice II in the Nemean Games; but post-Callimachean poets, responding perhaps to programmatic motifs implicit in Callimachus' language, assign the equivalent location in their poems or books of poems to more or less explicit poetic programmes.<sup>26</sup> Virgil's proem, then, directs us to Callimachus both by means of its position and through verbal and thematic allusion.<sup>27</sup> The hackneyed subjects rejected in the opening lines seem to be mainly Callimachean, and the metaphors of chariot and temple in lines 10–39 refer us back in turn to Callimachus' Pindaric models.<sup>28</sup> But Virgil, ironically, will attain the Callimachean ideal of originality by turning his back on Callimachean mythological themes, and writing instead a Lucretian philosophical epic (the *Georgics* itself) or an Ennian celebration of Octavian's *res gestae* (the future project embodied here in the temple metaphor). Thus, echoes of (Pindar and) Callimachus are combined with allusions to Ennius and Lucretius.<sup>29</sup> In a passage where Virgil is celebrating both his own and Octavian's triumphs, it is appropriate that the Ennian and Lucretian intertexts are also encomiastic and/or involve discussion of poetics. Lines 8–12 recall Ennius' self-celebration in his 'epitaph' and Lucretius' praise of both Ennius<sup>30</sup> and his philosophical 'hero' Epicurus:

<sup>26</sup> For possible programmatic elements in the *Victoria Berenices*, see Thomas (1983), who also discusses links with Propertius 3.1 and Statius 3.1.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. esp. *pastor ab Amphryso* ('shepherd by the Amphrysus') with Call. *Hymn* 2.47–9 (as Thomas notes, the river is only mentioned in connexion with Apollo in these two passages); the reference to Molochus (19) also looks to Callimachus. In more general terms, Virgil's rejection of hackneyed themes and the imagery of the proem as a whole resonate with the much-imitated programmatic passages *Aet.* fr. 1, *Ep.* 28 and *Hymn* 2.105–12. For further detail on all these points, see Thomas *ad loc.*

<sup>28</sup> The chariot-journey and the temple are common Pindaric metaphors for poetic composition: see Wilkinson (1970), Buchheit (1972), pp. 148–59, Lundström (1976). Thomas (1983) argues that the temple metaphor also occurred in Callimachus, who should therefore be regarded as Virgil's 'model'; but it is hard to see what *prevents* the reader from thinking of Pindar as well as Callimachus. (In Thomas' own terms (cf. Thomas (1986), pp. 188f.), we could identify this passage as an example of 'window reference', in which close imitation of a model is interrupted by a reference to the model's source.)

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Buchheit (1972), pp. 99–103; Hardie (1986), pp. 48–50; Hinds (1998), pp. 52–5.

<sup>30</sup> The Lucretian lines probably also contain Ennian echoes: see Skutsch (1985), p. 167.

temptanda via est, qua me quoque possim  
*tollere humo victorque virum volitare per ora.*<sup>31</sup>  
*primus* ego in patriam mecum, modo vita supersit,  
*Aonio* rediens *deducam vertice* Musas;  
*primus* Idumaeas *referam* tibi, Mantua, palmas . . .

Geo. 3.8–12

I too must find a way to rise from the earth and fly victoriously over the lips of men. I will be the first, if my life lasts, to return to my homeland, leading the Muses down from the peak of Helicon; I will be the first to bring Idumaeian palms to you, Mantua . . .

nemo me lacrimis decoret nec funera fletu  
*faxit. cur? volito vivos per ora virum.*

Ennius Ep. 18V

Let no one honour me with tears nor celebrate my funeral with weeping. Why? Because I fly, still living, over the lips of men.

Ennius . . . noster . . . qui *primus* amoeno  
*detulit ex Helicone* perenni fronde coronam,<sup>32</sup>  
*per gentis Italas hominum quae clara clueret.*

DRN 1.117–19

Our own Ennius, who first brought down from lovely Helicon a garland of evergreen leaves, to win him bright renown amongst the tribes of Italy.

*primum* Graius<sup>33</sup> homo mortalis *tollere* contra  
*est oculos ausus primusque obsistere* contra  
 . . .  
*ergo* vivida vis animi *pervicit*, et extra  
*processit* longe flammantia moenia mundi  
*atque omne immensum peragravit* mente animoque,  
*unde refert nobis victor* quid possit oriri,  
*quid nequeat* . . .

DRN 1.66f., 72–6

<sup>31</sup> The strong alliteration connects this line with both the Ennian epigram and Lucretius 1.72.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Virgil's *palmae* ('palms', 12), and his olive garland in 21.

<sup>33</sup> The Greek/Roman theme which runs through Lucretius' proem (cf. the Roman opening – *Aeneadum genetrix* ('Mother of Aeneas' sons', 1), picked up by *Romanis* ('Romans') in 40 – and the poet's remarks on the problems of translating Greek philosophy into Latin poetry in 136–45) is highly relevant here: Virgil similarly emphasizes his appropriation of Greek tradition in 10–12 and 19f.

A man of Greece was first who dared to lift his mortal gaze, and first to stand against it [religion] . . . So his vigorous mind was victorious, and ranged far beyond the flaming ramparts of the world, roaming in thought through the boundless universe; from there he brought back to us, victoriously, knowledge of what can come to be and what cannot . . .

The position of the proem also connects it, as already noted, with Lucretius' similar reflexions on the originality of his poem in the corresponding location, *DRN* 4.1–25;<sup>34</sup> and the triumphal imagery suggests a further allusion to the triumph of Ennius' patron, M. Fulvius Nobilior, who literally 'brought the Muses to Italy', by importing their statues as war-spoils from Ambracia and setting them up in the temple (cf. *Geo.* 3.16) of Hercules Musarum.<sup>35</sup>

Whereas at the end of book 2 conflicting intertexts are called upon in such a way as to emphasize irreconcilable differences between them, here the Pindaric, Callimachean, Ennian and Lucretian echoes are formed into a harmonious whole.<sup>36</sup> The triumphal and epinician imagery serves as a unifying force, and, while there is undoubtedly a paradox in the way that Virgil appropriates earlier poets' voices to stake his own claim to originality, the rhetoric of the passage is supremely confident. By expressing his 'anxiety of influence', the poet has neutralized it: the proem indicates both a sense of 'belatedness' and a triumphant consciousness of having mastered the tradition. In order to live up to Callimachus' poetic ideals, it is necessary to be paradoxically unCallimachean – but in this passage, at least, the paradox is presented as a solution rather than a problem.

I have concentrated at some length on this central programmatic diptych, because it seems to me to suggest two quite different ways of reading the poem. The double *makarismos* at the end of book 2 suggests an untidy, open text, which we might characterize as a kind of forum for dialogue

<sup>34</sup> Note especially the 'untouched woods' of *Geo.* 3.40f., which look back through Lucretius' *integros fontis* ('untouched springs', *DRN* 4.2) to the Callimachean image of the untrodden path (*Aet.* fr. 1.27f. Pf.) or untouched spring (*Hymn* 2.111f.). *iuvat* ('it pleases me') in 23 also recalls the repeated *iuvat* of *DRN* 4.2f.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Hardie (1986), p. 49, n. 39; Hinds (1998), pp. 54f.

<sup>36</sup> This is not to suggest that the proem is unproblematic, however. In particular, there is some equivocation as to the reference of the triumphal metaphor: is Virgil's poetic 'victory' to be seen as something already achieved (in the *Georgics* itself), or do the future tenses point to a newly-conceived but not-yet-executed project (the future *Aeneid*)? Cf. Wilkinson (1969), pp. 323f.; Kraggerud (1998).

between various intertexts.<sup>37</sup> On this reading, there is no strongly marked authorial voice within the text pushing the reader in one particular direction. As will become clear in subsequent chapters, I read the *Georgics* as challenging Lucretius' world-view (in particular) by bringing it into conflict with those of other didactic intertexts, but not as finally rejecting it or substituting a preferred alternative.

The proem to book 3, on the other hand, presents us with an authorial figure who is much more firmly in control of his material.<sup>38</sup> The emphasis here is on poetic artistry and the pursuit of originality for its own sake; the allusions to earlier texts in this passage suggest not so much a dialogue between intertexts as a self-conscious and self-reflexive meditation on the relationship between tradition and innovation.

The reading strategies prompted by these two passages could be extended to the poem as a whole, and seem to me to be complementary rather than mutually exclusive. One possible strategy is to read for rough edges, clashes between intertexts, questions rather than answers, conflict rather than resolution. This approach seems to me to work particularly well if we want to get at the ideas and world-view embodied in the *Georgics*, and the ways in which it responds to the ideas put forward by earlier poets in the didactic tradition. The sheer difficulty of the poem (suggested by the diversity of reactions it has evoked amongst critics) is particularly striking in a genre which overtly claims to *teach* its reader: we might expect Virgil to offer us answers rather than problems and unanswered questions. On the other hand, it is also possible to read the poem (as Farrell, notably, does) as a self-reflexive, erudite work in the Callimachean tradition. While this aspect of the poem will be of less concern to me in the present study, I see no reason to attempt to rule it out of court. Indeed, since it is my contention that the *Georgics* is a profoundly open text, it follows that it will support a number of different readings, none of which need be seen as finally 'right'.

Up to this point, I have focussed mainly on passages which would certainly pass muster as allusive according to conventional philological criteria. I have already hinted, however, that such traditional criteria need not always be brought to bear. Once the reader has, so to speak,

<sup>37</sup> On 'open' and 'closed' texts, see e.g. Eco (1981), pp. 3–43, and cf. Fowler (1989b) for some different senses of the term 'closure'.

<sup>38</sup> But see pp. 44–5 below for some qualifications: the confident tone of this passage is to some extent undermined or at least problematized elsewhere in the poem.

been sensitized to the importance of a particular intertext, apparently casual similarities will often be enough to 'reactivate' that intertext.<sup>39</sup> My argument is, then, essentially cumulative: the greater the number of close echoes of the *DRN*, the more likely we are to have Lucretius in the forefront of our minds and so to perceive less specific resemblances as allusions. *Georgics* 1.316–34, for example, is a set piece description of a storm, which suddenly descends on the farmer's ripening crops. The ecphrasis is punctuated by military metaphors: *ventorum* . . . *proelia* ('battles of the winds', 318), *agmen aquarum* ('a flood/army of water', 322), the thunderbolt as Jupiter's weapon (329). The passage is discussed in detail in chapter 3, where I point out that much of the vocabulary here is Lucretian; nevertheless, it might be objected that comparisons between battles and storms are such a common epic *topos* that we should not posit a specific allusion here. But my hypothetical objector has failed to take account of the context. The earlier part of book 1 has been pervaded by a series of unmistakable Lucretian allusions, which are particularly prominent in generalizing passages where the poet pauses to reflect on the relationship between human beings, the gods and the natural world. The language becomes strikingly Lucretian in 50–63 (the division of the world into different regions, suited to different crops, after the Flood), 118–46 (the 'aetiology of *labor*'), 193–203 (reflexions on the degeneration of nature) and 231–51 (the five celestial and terrestrial zones).<sup>40</sup> So when this passage implicitly raises the problem of theodicy yet again (why does Jupiter seem so vindictive towards the apparently innocent farmer?), we do not need much prompting to think again of Lucretius (who would of course argue that the indifference of nature towards human concerns proves that the world is not under divine control).

Each of my last three chapters deals with a concept (*labor* and *curae*; the marvels of nature) or complex of imagery (military metaphors) common to the two poems. Here again my argument does not necessarily rely on the identification of specific allusions, although numerous verbal parallels can in fact be traced between the relevant passages. The cumulative effect of the allusive markers which do, indubitably, punctuate the poem gives the reader sufficient encouragement to treat these more general parallels as significant. Once we have been alerted to Virgil's engagement with the

<sup>39</sup> A similar process of 'reactivation' (in Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*) is analysed by Riffaterre (1990), pp. 98–104.

<sup>40</sup> For detailed discussion of all these passages, see pp. 60–86 below.



Lucretian world-view, dialogue between the texts can be seen to continue even where it is not strongly marked as such.

The line of interpretation adopted in this study, then, takes the detection of allusions (in more or less the conventional sense) as its starting point. Close verbal and other parallels will be treated as allusive markers, which open up an intertextual dialogue between the *Georgics*, the *DRN* and other works within (and beyond) the didactic tradition. Once this dialogue has been established, it can be reopened at any time, wherever coincidences of language, theme or imagery can be perceived between texts, even if these are not close enough to count as allusions according to traditional criteria. I will argue – to return to one of the questions with which I began – that Lucretius is the most important participant in this intertextual dialogue, in the sense that the *DRN* is the text most frequently evoked and subjected to the closest scrutiny throughout the poem; but this emphasis should not be taken as excluding the possibility of other readings. Virgil also engages with Hesiod, Aratus, Callimachus, Homer and others; and – while it seems to me perverse to ignore the pervasive presence of Lucretian (and anti-Lucretian) voices within the poem – I am not suggesting that we should regard the *DRN* as Virgil's sole 'model'. Ultimately, as I have already suggested, any reading of a text will be the product as much of the reader's own preoccupations as of the objective 'reality' of the words on the page; as a late twentieth-century reader, I am concerned to keep Virgil's text as open and pluralistic as possible, and to see it as questioning (as opposed to either accepting or rejecting) tradition. I hope that such an interpretation will help to make sense of Virgil's poem for my own readers, at the turn of the twentieth century and the twenty-first.

## *Beginnings and endings*

We saw in chapter 1 that the very centre of the *Georgics* – the finale to book 2 and the proem to book 3 – is occupied by a pair of programmatic statements, which indicate the complex intertextual make-up of the poem. Lucretius is given a prominent part in both passages; and in this sense, too, the central block is emblematic of the poem as a whole. In this chapter, I will suggest that the second finale and the third proem are typical of the poem as a whole, in their close engagement with Lucretius: each of the eight beginnings and endings can be read as a response to central themes of the *DRN*. But we can also see the elaborate patterning of the poem as a Lucretian element in itself.

One of the most strikingly ‘classical’ features of the *Georgics* is the elegant balance of its structure. It has often been observed that ‘dark’ books (1 and 3) alternate with books which are generally lighter in mood (2 and 4).<sup>1</sup> On a smaller scale, there are a number of instances of responsion between passages which occupy parallel positions in different books, or within the same book. For example, the digression on the end of the Golden Age begins at line 125 of the first book, while the description of the old Corycian’s garden is located in a corresponding position in 4.125ff.; similarly, the digression on *amor* at the end of the first half of book 3 has clear parallels with the account of the Noric plague at the end of the second half. But the clearest example of this kind of patterning – and the one which will principally concern us in this chapter – is to be found in the proems and conclusions of the four books.

Each book begins with a separate introductory passage which outlines the contents of the book (or the whole poem in the case of book

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Otis (1964), pp. 148–50, Wilkinson (1969), pp. 71–5. There is now a good (though brief) treatment in Hardie (1998), pp. 48f.

1) and invokes one or more gods; and each book ends with a clearly defined finale. These proems and finales are interconnected in various ways: long and short proems<sup>2</sup> alternate, and addresses to Maecenas are symmetrically placed at 1.2, 2.41, 3.41 and 4.2; books 2 and 3 begin with invocations to the appropriate deities (Bacchus in 2, Pales and Apollo in 3), while 1 and 4 follow a slightly different pattern (a generalized appeal to twelve gods of the countryside and the soon-to-be-deified Octavian in 1, Apollo as god of poetry in 4); the long proems to books 1 and 3 deal with the poet's relationship with his subject-matter and with the *princeps*, whereas the shorter proems are more directly tied to the themes of their respective books (though they also contain programmatic elements).<sup>3</sup>

The conclusions are also linked in various ways. The finales to books 1 and 2 deal in different ways with the relationship between war/politics and agriculture; book 2 ends with a glance back into the past (the foundation of Rome and the age of Saturn, 2.532–40), corresponding to the glimpse of the farmer of the future in 1.493–7. The charioteer simile in 1.512–14 is also picked up by the brief reference to the chariot of poetry in 2.541f. The finale to book 3 describes the death of animals in the Noric plague, while the finale to 4 begins with the death of Aristaeus' bees and ends with the birth of a new swarm from the carcasses of sacrificial cattle.

Despite the widely-held view that elaborate structural patterning of this kind is characteristic of the Augustan obsession with the perfection of form, it can be argued that Lucretius offered an important precedent here. The practice of beginning each book with its own proem seems to have been a Lucretian innovation, adopted from the prose tradition.<sup>4</sup> Each of

<sup>2</sup> The long proems (1.1–42 and 3.1–48) are almost equal in length; the short proems (2.1–8 and 4.1–7) are still closer.

<sup>3</sup> For further links between proems (e.g. *te . . . canam* ['I shall sing of you'] in 2.2 picked up by *te . . . canemus* ['we will sing of you'] in 3.1; *hactenus* ['thus far'] in 2.1 picked up by *protinus* ['next'] in 4.1) see Thomas *ad* 2.1–8.

<sup>4</sup> Earlier epic poems may have one or more invocations to the Muse, though these do not necessarily fall at the beginnings of books (*Iliad* 2.484–93 is a notable example). Apollonius, for instance, has brief appeals to the Muse at the opening of books 3 and 4, but launches straight into the narrative in book 2. Ennius seems to have followed a similar practice: books 6 and 10 apparently began with short invocations and comments on subject-matter; longer programmatic prefaces were also included at important points of transition in the narrative (books 1, 7, 16), but it is unlikely that all 18 books had proems (cf. Skutsch (1985), p. 367). Pre-Lucretian didactic poems usually had only one book, so that the question does not arise

the six books of the *DRN* opens with a eulogy of Epicurus and/or a call to the study of his philosophy (preceded in the first book by the famous hymn to Venus); this is combined in each case with a 'syllabus' or discussion of the book's contents, usually accompanied by a brief summary of the ground covered so far (1.54–61 + 127–35; 2.62–6; 3.31–93; 4.26–45;<sup>5</sup> 5.55–90; 6.43–95). Lucretius also rounds off each of his six books with a resounding conclusion, though these tend to be less clearly demarcated than Virgil's finales. Not only do the proems and syllabuses of the *Georgics* seem to owe something to the Lucretian pattern, but the structural links between the four Virgilian proems which we examined above also have parallels in the *DRN*, where similar complexes of imagery serve to connect the odd-numbered and the even-numbered proems respectively: those to books 1, 3 and 5 are dominated by images of light and darkness and of storm and calm, and also lay emphasis on the power of the spoken word; those to books 2, 4 and 6 are linked by the theme of true and false pleasures.<sup>6</sup> There are parallels too between 1 and 4 (Epicurus' wanderings through the universe and Lucretius' through the haunts of the Muses) and between 3 and 6 (Epicurus as divine prophet and healer), which serve to link the two halves of the poem. It is also noteworthy, as we saw in chapter 1, that both poets devote their opening lines to eulogy and dedication, postponing invocation of the Muses and discussion of poetics to a 'proem in the middle'.<sup>7</sup>

More striking than these general similarities, however, is a clear pattern of alternation between dark finales and light proems, which parallels the alternation of light and dark books in Virgil. It is a truism that the beginnings and ends of books and poems are apt to impress themselves particularly on the reader; and Lucretius exploits this formal feature of his work for rhetorical and thematic ends. Each of the six books – with the partial exception of 5 – ends with images of destruction, decay and death:

(Empedocles is a probable exception, though the testimonia are problematic; see Osborne (1987) for details). In the prose tradition, by contrast, it is quite common to preface each book with an address to the dedicatee and some indication of subject-matter: see, for example, Varro, *De Re Rustica*; Cicero, *De Oratore*, *Tusculans*, *De Officiis* and *De Divinatione*; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*. See further Janson (1964).

<sup>5</sup> The text here is problematic: see Gale (1994b), pp. 2–5 (with further bibliography).

<sup>6</sup> Light and darkness: 1.9 and 136–45, 3.1f. and 22, 5.11f.; storm and calm: 1.6–9, 3.1f., 5.10–12; power of speech: 1.39 and 75–9, 3.12f., 5.54; true and false pleasures: the sweetness of *ataraxia* vs. the vanity of wealth and power in 2; the deceptive but healing sweetness of Lucretius' poetry in 4; Epicurus' *solacia* vs. material goods in 6. For these and other correspondences, see Gale (1994b), pp. 8–10.

<sup>7</sup> The term is derived from Conte (1992): see pp. 11–12 above.

books 1 and 2 both close with discussion of the disintegration and ultimate collapse of our world,<sup>8</sup> books 3 and 4 with diatribes against the fear of death and the destructive passion of romantic love,<sup>9</sup> and book 6 with the devastating account of the Athenian plague which forms the climax to the poem as a whole. The proems, by contrast, are filled with images of light, peace, calm, sweetness and pleasure. This alternation has two main effects. The first is a product of the contrast between each proem and the finale of the preceding book: Lucretius shows us first the darkness of life without the Epicurean message, then the consolation and peace that Epicureanism will confer on the disciple. This effect is clearest at the end of book 2, where the gloomy (though misguided) laments of the ploughman and vine-dresser are immediately followed by a rapturous hymn to Epicurus, 'who was able to lift up so bright a light in the midst of such great darkness'. A similar effect can be observed at the end of book 5: though Lucretius' culture-history in fact ends on a rather optimistic note, much of the preceding discussion has suggested that human beings are incapable of using their discoveries wisely and that they will always be prevented from achieving true happiness by their misguided and insatiable desire for novelty; the sixth book then begins with the 'discovery' of Epicurus (*reperitum*, 6.5), whose philosophy is represented as a cure for fear and desire and as the straight path to the *summum bonum* (24–34).

At the rhetorical level, then, the alternation of gloomy finales and joyful proems is directed towards the encouragement of the reader. At the same time, the successive images of birth and growth in the proems and of decay and death in the finales reflect the natural cycle which regulates the Lucretian cosmos. It is a central tenet of Lucretius' system that all composite bodies – including human beings and the world as a whole – are subject to a gradual process of growth and decline. The poet constantly reminds us of the principle that birth and death are interdependent: nature creates one thing from another, and birth can only take place through the

<sup>8</sup> The effect is softened in book 1 both by the fact that the scene of cosmic collapse in 1102–13 represents a counter-factual condition (while foreshadowing the subsequent discussion of the growth and decay of our world, 2.1023–1174), and by the encouraging coda (1114–17) which closes the book. This softening effect is consonant with Lucretius' didactic strategy throughout the *DRN*: exhortations and encouraging addresses are concentrated at the beginning, and attractive but ultimately misleading or one-sided images (Venus in the proem being the most obvious example) tend to be undermined over the course of the poem. See further Gale (1994a), pp. 56f. and 211–14.

<sup>9</sup> More specifically, each of the central books closes with an image of death or gradual decay: the final lines of book 3 deal with the chilling theme of 'eternal death', and book 4 ends with the image of dripping water gradually boring through stone.

death of something else (1.250–64); the forces of creation and destruction are in equilibrium, and every day the cries of new-born babies mingle with funeral laments (2.569–80); one race arises as another declines, and the torch of life is passed on from one generation to the next as in a relay race (2.67–79); life is given to us only on lease – no one is granted the freehold (3.97of.). The gradual growth and decay of our world are treated at length in books 2 and 5, and it is essential to the argument of book 3 that the ‘birth’ and development of the human soul entail its mortality.<sup>10</sup> This cycle of growth and decay is also a structuring principle within each book as well as of the poem as a whole. The pattern is clearer in some books than others, but can be seen to operate at some level in all six. Book 1 begins with life-giving Venus and the new birth and growth of animals and plants in springtime; the opening arguments of the poem proper are also pervaded by images of creation and birth.<sup>11</sup> At the end of the book, growth is balanced by decay, taking the form in this case of the apocalyptic vision of the death of our world in 1102–13.<sup>12</sup> A similar, though less obvious, pattern is present in the second book: the emphasis on birth and growth in (for example) 81, 142–9 and 167–74 is complemented by the detailed discussion of the end of the world in the finale. Book 3 deals first with the nature of the soul, then with its mortality; book 4 similarly moves from the operation of the senses in waking life to sleep and dreams, which are connected to death both through the similarity of the physiological processes (920–4) and by the recurrent theme of dreams involving the dead (38–45, 733f., 760f.). In book 5, the order is reversed, as the poet deals first with the destruction of the world (235–415), then with its origins and development (416–508, 783–1457). Finally, references in the proem of book 6 to Athens as the source of new discoveries are balanced by the breakdown of society in the Athenian plague at the end of the book. The plague also closes two further cycles: one that opens in 5.925, where the poet begins his history of human culture; and a larger cycle that

<sup>10</sup> 2.1105–74; 5.235–508; for the interdependence of birth and death in discussion of the mortality of the soul, see esp. 3.417, 445–58, 670–783. On the cycle of growth and decay in Lucretius, see further Liebeschuetz (1968) and Minadeo (1965 and 1969).

<sup>11</sup> E.g. 161–73, 174–9, 192–5, 208–14, 227–31 and especially 252–61.

<sup>12</sup> Minadeo (1965) points out that the proem to book 1 can be seen from this point of view as a microcosm of the poem as a whole: it begins with Venus *genetrix* (‘the mother’), and ends (if we leave aside the brief poetic programme of lines 136–45) with images of death and burial (102–35, especially *morbo adfectis somnoque sepultis*, ‘[when we are] afflicted by disease or buried in sleep’, 133, and *quorum tellus amplectitur ossa*, ‘whose bones are held in the earth’s embrace’, 135, phrases which look forward to the closing lines of book 6).

begins with the hymn to Venus in the proem.<sup>13</sup> The whole poem is spanned by these two images of birth and death, growth and decay. The plague functions in various related ways as a kind of test of or incentive to the reader. If we have learned our Epicurean lesson properly, not only will we be able to regard the sufferings of the Athenians with equanimity, but we will also realize that disease and death are simply the downside in an everlasting cycle of creation and destruction: the 'answer' to the finale is the proem, and the reader who seeks consolation must turn back again to Venus and the beginning of the poem. Moreover, the plague can be read on a symbolic level as a kind of warning: if Venus is in part a symbol of Epicurean peace and pleasure, the plague victims show us, through their psychological distress and tortured fear of death, the darkness of the non-Epicurean life.<sup>14</sup>

Virgil's response to the Lucretian cycle – like so much in his poem – is highly ambiguous. Though the *Georgics* is also dominated by alternating images of growth and decay, order and chaos, the way that these images are deployed seems to invite a very different reaction from the calm acceptance preached by Lucretius. As we shall see, though Virgil's poem is more tightly structured at the formal level, its thematic development is much more open and fluid than that of the *DRN*.

An alternating pattern is particularly clear in Virgil's four finales: book 1 ends with the perversion of agriculture by war, contrasting with the 'praise of country life' at the end of book 2, where man and nature collaborate and the farmer lives a life of perfect peace far removed from the cares of the soldier and the politician. This harmonious cooperation between man and nature is then reversed again in the account of the plague at the end of book 3, where the agricultural world is ravaged once more – not, this time, by man, but by the forces of nature itself. Finally, the plague is answered by the Aristaeus epyllion, in which death is prominent, but is also transcended in different ways by the power of Orpheus' music and by the 'rebirth' of Aristaeus' bees. As we shall see, none of these passages is as

<sup>13</sup> For a full discussion of ring-composition and other closural features in the finale to book 6, see especially P. G. Fowler (1997).

<sup>14</sup> For these interpretations of the finale, see especially Commager (1957), Bright (1971), Clay (1983), pp. 257–66, Gale (1994a), pp. 224–8. For the mental sufferings of the plague victims, see esp. 1158f., 1208–14, 1230–4, 1239–42. As Commager points out, many of Lucretius' additions to or apparent mistranslations of Thucydides serve to intensify this emphasis on the psychological: note especially *cor maestum* ('sorrowful heart', 1152), *anxius angor* ('anguished anxiety', 1158), *timore* ('fear', 1179), *perturbatur animi mens in maerore metuque* ('the mind was troubled by sorrow and fear', 1183), *vitai nimium cupidus* ('too greedy for life', 1240).

straightforwardly 'light' or 'dark' as the above summary suggests; nevertheless, the alternating pattern is quite clear. But Virgil's version of the cycle tends to separate out the two aspects much more than Lucretius' does. This is particularly clear in the finales to books 2 and 3, which present us in turn with highly idealized images of nature's bounty and beauty and with an unrelieved catalogue of suffering and death. Unlike Lucretius, Virgil does not attempt to 'correct' this one-sidedness in any straightforward way: we are simply offered two different views of the way things are and left to resolve the apparent contradiction for ourselves.

A second way in which Virgil transforms Lucretius' structuring principle can be discerned in the relationship between proems and finales. Like Lucretius, Virgil begins each of the four books with a proem which seems unambiguously positive in its implications. In Virgil's case, however, the move from proem to conclusion is a move from simplicity to complexity rather than from light to darkness. In analysing the four finales in detail, I will draw attention to a pervasive air of ambiguity and uncertainty which haunts the ends of the books: the apparent clarity and confidence of the proems gives way in each case – even in the 'light' books – to a view of things which is characterized by shifts of focus and perspective, by tensions and even contradictions.

Let us begin at the beginning, with the proem to book 1. The opening summary and invocation call upon a wide range of intertexts, from Homer to Lucretius. The most obvious and widely recognized model is Varro's *De Re Rustica* (1.1.5f.), which similarly begins with an appeal to twelve rustic gods. But Virgil's prayer is inserted into a framework which has closer analogies with the long proem to Lucretius' first book. The latter passage is almost 150 lines in length, and falls into several distinct sections: after the prayer to Venus (1–49), Lucretius continues with an appeal to his dedicatee, Memmius (50–3); then follow a brief summary of the poem's contents (54–61), a second 'hymn' in praise of Epicurus (62–79), a lengthy discussion of the poem's purpose (namely, to combat superstition (80–101) and the fear of death (102–35)); and, finally, a second appeal or dedication to Memmius (136–45). Each of these elements has a parallel in Virgil's proem, though the order – and the number of lines devoted to each – is different. Virgil's 'table of contents' in lines 1–5 is much more compressed than the Lucretian syllabus, and the statement of purpose is reduced to a brief mention in lines 41f. of the poet's 'pity' for his agricultural audience.<sup>15</sup> There are more striking



similarities between Lucretius' double dedication and pair of hymns (to Venus and to Epicurus) and the markedly bipartite structure of the *Georgics* proem. Nineteen lines each are devoted to twelve agricultural deities and to Octavian respectively; and the poem is effectively dedicated both to Maecenas, who is addressed by name in the opening lines, and to Octavian, who is called upon in the role of inspiring deity at the end of the proem. Rather than address a single dedicatee twice, as Lucretius does, Virgil has divided the honours between two different addressees.

It will be seen that Virgil has redistributed the roles of the three Lucretian protagonists, Venus, Epicurus and Memmius. Memmius' role as reader is divided between Maecenas and Octavian; more importantly, Octavian takes over the roles of both Venus (as 'Muse'<sup>16</sup>) and Epicurus (as quasi-divine benefactor).<sup>17</sup> The first of these two parallels is suggested particularly by the choice of three realms or spheres of influence (earth, sea or sky) open to the future god; Virgil also mentions a fourth realm, the underworld, only to dismiss it immediately. The antecedents of this passage are complex,<sup>18</sup> but a clear link can be traced with Lucretius' proem, where the four elemental masses figure prominently.<sup>19</sup> Venus is depicted as ruling over heaven (*caeli*, 2 and 6; *caelum*, 9), earth (*terras*, 3; *tellus*, 7), sea (*mare*, 3; *aequora ponti*, 8) and the aether (realm of the heavenly bodies: *signa*, 'signs [i.e. constellations]', 2; *diffuso lumine*, 'out-poured light', 9); the connexion is further reinforced by Octavian's putative control over the weather, as well as the fertility of the soil (*auctorem frugum tempestatumque potentem*, 'causing crops to grow and holding sway over the seasons', 27), which parallels the role of the Lucretian goddess in calming the storms of winter (6–9) as well as filling the world with her creatures (2–5).<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Note that the image of the poem – or its contents – as a journey (*ignaros . . . viae*, 41) also features at the beginning of Lucretius' statement of purpose (*rationis inire elementa . . . viamque | indugredi*, 81f.).

<sup>16</sup> It is noteworthy that the Muses themselves figure in neither proem: their appearance is postponed to the midpoint of each poem (*Pieridum*, *DRN* 4.1; *Musae*, *Geo.* 2.475, *Musas*, 3.11). Contrast Hesiod and Aratus, both of whom begin with a hymn to Zeus, but also appeal to the Muses (*Op.* 1; *Phaen.* 16–18).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Paschalis (1984).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. esp. *Il.* 15.187–93, where Poseidon tells how Zeus and his brothers shared out the rulership of heaven, Hades and the sea, but agreed that earth should be common to all.

<sup>19</sup> For the argument that all four elements (not just air, earth, water) are to be detected in these lines, see Furley (1970), further developed by Sedley (1989).

<sup>20</sup> Note also that Octavian is imagined in line 28 as crowning himself with a wreath of myrtle, the plant sacred to Venus (*materna . . . myrto*, 'your mother's myrtle').

At the same time, Octavian's forthcoming deification has parallels with Epicurus' conquest of the heavens (1.62–79). Elsewhere in the *DRN*, Epicurus is proclaimed a god (*deus ille fuit*, 'he was a god', 5.8), compared to the agricultural deities Ceres and Liber (5.14–21), praised as a saviour who rescued the human race from the metaphorical storms of ignorance and fear (5.10–12 and cf. 2.1–4) and, finally, compared to the sun, whose light eclipses the stars (3.1042–4).<sup>21</sup> This complex of eulogistic *topoi* is again echoed in the three choices of function open to Octavian, as god of crops and seasons, as object of sailors' prayers, and as star-god. But Virgil goes one better than Lucretius here: whereas even the godlike Epicurus died (*ipse Epicurus obit*, 'Epicurus himself died', 3.1042), Octavian will go straight to heaven and bypass the underworld completely (36–9).<sup>22</sup>

In the closing lines of the proem, Octavian's three roles – as inspiring deity, as soon-to-be-deified hero and as dedicatee, analogous to Lucretius' Venus, Epicurus and Memmius respectively – come together. Like Venus, he is asked to assist the poet in his enterprise: *mecum* ('together with me', 41) suggests the same kind of amicable relationship as Lucretius' *sociam* ('ally', 24). The journey imagery which is present in both *facilem cursum* ('an easy voyage', 40) and *ignaros viae* ('ignorant of the way', 41) is of course very common in programmatic contexts, but may make us think particularly of the proem to *DRN* 2, where the poet pictures himself as looking down from the calm citadel of philosophy and pitying (cf. *miseratus*, 'taking pity on') the unenlightened who stray blindly below (cf. *ignaros viae*, 'ignorant of the way').<sup>23</sup> The poem itself is envisaged as a journey undertaken by the poet and/or his reader – like Virgil's *cursum* ('voyage') – in *DRN* 1.81–2,<sup>24</sup> 3.3 and 6.92–5.

At the most obvious level, Virgil's conflation of the three separate Lucretian figures acts as a kind of answer or challenge to the most fundamental premises of the *DRN*. For Lucretius, Epicurus is the source of all truth, the gods are distant and indifferent, and Memmius' role is restricted to the largely passive function of absorbing the poet's teaching. It becomes clear as the poem proceeds that the public honours for which

<sup>21</sup> For Epicurus as saviour from storms and as Sol/Helios, see further Gale (1994a), pp. 124f. and 202–6.

<sup>22</sup> The reference to Tartarus is itself anti-Lucretian: though for Lucretius everyone must die, 'no one is given to black Tartarus' (3.966).

<sup>23</sup> For enlightenment as a journey and ignorance as *error*, see also *DRN* 1.332, 370f., 659, 711; 2.82, 229, 869; 3.105, 1052; 4.824; 5.55, 102; 6.27, 67 etc.

<sup>24</sup> It is perhaps significant that the verb *indugredi* (82), which Lucretius uses of the reader 'embarking' on the study of philosophy, is also employed by Virgil in referring to Octavian's 'entry into' his new role (1.42).

Memmius is praised at the outset are insignificant in the Epicurean scheme of things; true glory belongs to the saviour Epicurus, and the goal of human life should be to attain the peace of mind which is won through philosophical study, not through participation in political life.<sup>25</sup> By combining the roles of saviour, inspiring deity and reader/dedicatee in the person of Octavian, Virgil implicitly challenges the view that salvation comes through philosophy and political quietism. Like both Venus and Epicurus, the godlike Octavian is a bringer of peace; it is he who guarantees the conditions which allow both poetic composition and agriculture to proceed unhindered (cf. Lucretius' prayer to Venus in *DRN* 1.31–49).

The opening summary and the first invocation (addressed to twelve gods of agriculture) can also be seen as engaging with Lucretius, setting up an apparently straightforward view of the relationship between gods and mortals which will be problematized later in book 1 and throughout the poem. The first line may represent a nod in the direction of Hesiod (*quid faciat* . . . *quo sidere* ['what makes . . . under which star'] suggesting the division into 'works' and 'days' which characterizes both Hesiod's poem and the first book of the *Georgics*);<sup>26</sup> but the most important intertexts here are Lucretius and Varro. Varro's corresponding prayer is addressed to six pairs of deities: Jupiter and Tellus, Sol and Luna, Ceres and Liber, Robigo and Flora, Minerva and Venus, Lympha and Bonus Eventus. Only five of these twelve gods (Sun and Moon, Ceres and Liber, Minerva) are included in Virgil's list. Jupiter and Tellus are omitted, though it is notable that (unpersonified) sky and earth are mentioned in lines 6 and 7 respectively. Thus, we begin with Sun and Moon, who are invoked, not by name, but in a periphrasis which recalls the opening of Lucretius' hymn to Venus:<sup>27</sup>

vos, o clarissima mundi  
lumina, *labentem caelo* quae ducitis annum;  
Liber et *alma* Ceres, vestro si munere<sup>28</sup> *tellus*  
Chaoniam pingui glandem mutavit arista . . .

*Geo.* 1.5–8

<sup>25</sup> See especially 2.9–19, 3.59–78 and 5.1120–35. On Lucretius' political stance, see further Minyard (1985), esp. pp. 36–42; Fowler (1989a); and ch. 7 below.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Servius, *Geo. praef.*

<sup>27</sup> The phrase *hinc canere incipiam* ('from here I will begin my song') in line 5 also has a Lucretian flavour: cf. *DRN* 1.54f. (the opening lines of Lucretius' 'syllabus'), *nam tibi* . . . *disserere incipiam* ('for I will begin to expound to you').

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *per te quoniam*, 'since by your power', *DRN* 1.4; *tellus* ('earth') at the end of *Geo.* 1.7 also picks up *tellus* in the same position in *DRN* 1.7.

You, o brightest lights of the world, who lead the year as it glides through the heavens; Liber and kindly Ceres, if by your gift the earth exchanged the Chaonian acorn for rich grain . . .

*alma Venus, caeli subter labentia signa  
quae mare navigerum, quae terras frugiferentis  
concelebras.*

DRN 1.2–4<sup>29</sup>

Kindly Venus, you who – beneath the gliding signs of heaven – fill with your creatures the ship-freighted sea and the grain-rich earth.

The phrasing of the address to Ceres and Liber also points to a concern with aetiology which distinguishes Virgil's prayer from Varro's.<sup>30</sup> The Roman agricultural deities Robigo and Flora and the personified abstracts Lympha and Bonus Eventus are consequently neglected in favour of Neptune (as *heures* of the horse), Aristaeus and Triptolemus; and Minerva is explicitly called on as *inventrix* of the vine, whereas Varro appeals to her as its 'protector'. This interest in origins reflects the poet's Alexandrian affiliations;<sup>31</sup> but, given the Lucretian echoes in the opening lines of the prayer, it also seems reasonable to read the aetiological emphasis here in the light of the rationalized culture-history in book 5 of the *DRN*.

Lucretius' history of civilization is thoroughly polemical, and engages with both primitivist and progressivist ideas about the relationship between past and present. Above all, the poet is concerned to exclude the supernatural from his account: there never was a Golden Age of perfect peace, and the gods have had no part in any of the material and social

<sup>29</sup> Cf. also *DRN* 5.1436–8: *at vigiles mundi magnum versatile templum | sol et luna suo lustrantes lumine circum | perdocuere homines annorum tempora verti* ('but the sun and moon, watchmen of the sky, which patrol with their lights its great revolving precinct, taught men that the seasons of the year come regularly round'). The Lucretian passage could almost be read as a kind of gloss on Virgil's lines: why does Virgil call on the *mundi lumina* ('lights of the world')? Because the Sun and Moon taught men about the times and seasons (just as Liber taught them about wine and Ceres about the cultivation of cereal crops). We might even see a double meaning in the word *darissima* (both 'brightly shining' and 'clear' or 'unambiguous', like the *certissima signa* provided by the sun in 1.439; I owe this suggestion to Philip Hardie (*per litteras*)). But of course the rationalizing spirit of Lucretius' lines is entirely absent from Virgil's prayer.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Frenzt (1967), p. 6, who points out that Virgil uses past tenses where Varro (who is concerned with cult and the gods' patronage of different areas of agricultural production, rather than with past benefactions) uses the present.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Frenzt (1967), pp. 6–31 (possible Hellenistic sources for the myths of Ceres and Triptolemus, Bacchus, Neptune and Minerva as *heures*); Thomas *ad* 1.12–19, 14–15 and 19 (on the Alexandrian manner of the lines). Cf. esp. Ap. Rhod. 2.500–27 and Callim. *Aet.* fr. 75 Pf., both of which allude to Aristaeus' migration from Phthia to Ceos.

advances which have taken place.<sup>32</sup> ‘Progress’, such as it is, is simply the result of chance discoveries and human ingenuity, *usus et impigrae simul experientia mentis* (‘practice and the learning gained from experience by the quick mind’, 5.1452).<sup>33</sup> The one really crucial discovery was Epicurean philosophy itself, a point which is made in the proems to both book 5 and book 6. It is in the first of these two passages that Epicurus’ discoveries are favourably compared to the supposed gifts of Ceres and Liber; thus, links with the proem to *DRN* 5 help to connect the two halves of Virgil’s invocation. Octavian – if he should choose the role of *auctor frugum* (‘the one who causes crops to grow’) – will take over the function of *alma Ceres* (‘kindly [lit. nourishing] Ceres’), just as Epicurus’ benefaction transcends those of Ceres and Liber. What is missing in Virgil’s version is the satirical tone of Lucretius’ *synkrisis*: the latter poet distances himself from the stories of divine benefaction by means of the word *fertur* (‘it is said’, 14), and will in fact argue at the end of the same book that agriculture was invented without divine assistance, through the same combination of chance and ingenuity as the other discoveries described in the culture-history,<sup>34</sup> while acorns simply went out of fashion once more appetizing foods became available (1416). Virgil, on the other hand, appears to accept the notion of divine *heuretai* without demur – though he too will soon go on to problematize this conception of cultural development.<sup>35</sup>

In Lucretius, for example, the earth brings forth all species of animals without the aid of any deity (*primum tellus animalia fudit*, ‘the earth first poured forth animals’, 5.917; cf. 822–4); in Virgil, this function is taken over by Neptune (*cui prima frementem | fudit equum . . . tellus*, ‘for whom the earth first poured forth the champing horse’, 12–13).<sup>36</sup> Similarly,

<sup>32</sup> See Gale (1994a), pp. 156–82 (with further bibliography).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *experientia*, ‘learning gained from experience’, *Geo* 1.4 (in the same *sedes*). The word is relatively rare in this sense, though it also occurs in Varro (*R.R.* 1.18.7f., 1.19.2, 1.40.2); other examples (Manil. 1.61, Col. 1.1.16, Tac. *Hist.* 5.6.3) are later, and echo Virgil and/or Lucretius. See *TLL* 5.2.1652.14–72.

<sup>34</sup> The ‘discovery’ of planting and grafting is attributed specifically to *natura creatrix* (‘nature the creator’, 5.1362); Lucretius’ phrase hints at an etymological connexion between the name Ceres and the verb *creare*, ‘to create’. Cf. Ross (1987), p. 34 for the suggestion that Virgil’s *alma Ceres* (‘kindly [lit. nourishing] Ceres’) contains a similar etymological play (*alma* glossing *creare*; cf. Servius, *ad loc.*: *alma ab alendo*, *Ceres a creando dicta* [‘*alma* is derived from *alo*, to nourish, and Ceres from *creare*, to create’]); cf. Maltby (1991), s.vv., and O’Hara (1996), p. 253.

<sup>35</sup> See 1.118–59, discussed on pp. 61–7 below.

<sup>36</sup> Note that, though horses are not specifically mentioned in Lucretius’ zoogony, the line quoted forms part of a discussion of centaurs (and other composite monsters).

Lucretius explains how early man developed the art of agriculture by observing how new plants grow from the fruits which fall naturally to the ground in autumn; this would exclude Virgil's *oleae Minerva inventrix* ('Minerva, inventor of the olive'), as well as his Ceres and Liber.<sup>37</sup> The development of the plough and other agricultural implements is included in Lucretius' account of the evolution of metallurgy (5.1289–96); again, this is a process that begins by accident (1241–61) and continues through trial and error (1262–96). Virgil reinstates Triptolemus as *heuretes*, and does so in a phrase which recalls an earlier phase of Lucretius' prehistory (*uncique puer monstrator*<sup>38</sup> *aratri*, 'the youthful demonstrator of the hooked plough', *Geo.* 1.19 ~ *nec robustus erat curvi moderator aratri*, 'nor was there any sturdy wielder of the curved plough', *DRN* 5.933).

Of the other figures in Virgil's list, Aristaeus is primarily Alexandrian in his associations, while Pan, Silvanus and the Fauns and Dryads evoke the world of pastoral poetry.<sup>39</sup> We might recall, however, that three of the four members of the latter group also figure in Lucretius, who dismisses such figments as inventions of the *genus agricolum* ('race of farmers'), misled by echoes (and the desire to impress an audience with tales of wonder) into believing in the existence of rustic demigods.<sup>40</sup> Here and throughout the invocation Virgil reinstates the gods dethroned by Lucretius, while Octavian – as 'thirteenth god' – is substituted for the Epicurus of the *DRN*.

The first invocation concludes with a generalized appeal which sums up the un-Lucretian (or even anti-Lucretian) tone of the prayer as a whole:

dique deaeque omnes, studium quibus arva tueri,  
quique novas alitis non ullo semine fruges  
quique satis largum caelo demittitis imbrem. 21–3

All you gods and goddesses whose pleasure is to watch over the  
fields, you who nourish new fruits which grow without seed, and let  
fall on the sown crop abundant rain from heaven.

<sup>37</sup> Olives are mentioned explicitly at the end of Lucretius' account, 5.1373; they would also come under the generic heading *bacae*, 'berries', in 1363. Note, too, that the only named *inventor* in Lucretius is Epicurus himself, who is praised in 3.9 for his discovery of Truth.

<sup>38</sup> Mynors notes *ad loc.* that *monstrator* is 'a rare word at this date'; it seems to have been chosen because of its similarity to Lucretius' *moderator*.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. esp. 16f. with Theoc. *Id.* 1.123f.

<sup>40</sup> 4.580–94. Cf. also Gale (1994a), pp. 180f. on Lucretius' implicit rationalization of the myths of Pan and the satyrs in his discussion of the origins of music and dance, 5.1379ff.

Each of these three lines contains a direct challenge to Lucretius' world-view: far from 'watching over the fields', Lucretius' gods are 'far removed and detached from our affairs' (2.648); rain is 'let down' (*demissus* . . . *imber*, 6.496) mechanically by the clouds, without any call for divine intervention; and the idea that plants should spring up 'without seed' is for Lucretius simply an *adynaton* (e.g. 1.160: *nil semine egeret*, 'there would be no need for seed').<sup>41</sup>

The first proem as a whole can be seen as a answer to, or even a straightforward reversal of, Lucretius' world-view. Here, the gods are not distant and indifferent, but benevolent and close at hand (*praesentia numina*, 'ever-present deities', 10). Both the saviour Epicurus and Venus the bringer of peace are replaced by Octavian, who is praised in terms which seem playfully optimistic, after the manner of Hellenistic court poetry.<sup>42</sup> Salvation is not to be sought in philosophical withdrawal from the political arena, but through the protection of this new divinity, who is hailed as (potential) patron of farmers, sailors<sup>43</sup> and poets. Yet the Lucretian echoes could be read as introducing a subtly troubling note. Virgil suggests that agriculture, poetic composition, and, by implication, the peaceful functioning of society at large are dependent on the favour of the gods and the godlike *princeps*, rather as the functioning of the beehive in book 4 is totally dependent on the safety of the king-bee. But if Lucretius is right and the desire to exercise political power leads inevitably to disaster – both for the individual and for society<sup>44</sup> – then this absolute dependence is problematic, to say the least.

If this troubling note is present at all in the proem, it lies far beneath the surface. But before we have got very far into the first book, the poet has begun to complicate the comfortable picture of the relationship between pious human beings and benevolent deities that has been set up at the outset: we shall see in the next chapter how different views of the relationship between gods and mortals succeed each other throughout book 1 and the rest of the poem, undermining – or at least problematizing – the stance adopted in the proem. Similarly, the confident tone of the address to Octavian is modified by the way that the political sphere and

<sup>41</sup> On this phrase and its importance in both poems, see further p. 207 below.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Thomas *ad* 32–5 (noting echoes of Catullus and Callimachus in these lines).

<sup>43</sup> Agriculture and sailing are closely linked throughout the poem, especially in book 1: cf. 204–7, 253f., 303f., 371–3 etc., and see Thomas *ad* 1.50.

<sup>44</sup> See especially 5.1105–60, and cf. also Lucretius' analysis of the causes of civil strife in 3.59–86.

the relationship between poet and *princeps* are handled elsewhere, particularly in the finales to books 1 and 2.<sup>45</sup>

The finale to book 1 connects with the proem in various ways: again, there is a double appeal to the gods and to Octavian (498–501; 503–5); again, we focus on the relationship between the political and agricultural spheres; again, too, there are links with Lucretius' culture-history, specifically the section dealing with the discovery of metals and with subsequent military and agricultural developments (5.1241–378). These two areas of development run in parallel in Lucretius' account. In 5.1289–96, the poet discusses farm tools and weapons together; this is followed by a passage dealing with military innovations, particularly the use of animals in warfare, and culminates in a nightmarish vision of half-tamed beasts running amok in the chaos of battle (1308–49). Then, after a brief interlude on the art of weaving (1350–60), Lucretius turns to agriculture; again, the account culminates in an ecphrasis, the orderly and attractive agricultural landscape of 1370–8, which forms a kind of diptych with the 'beasts of battle' passage. The parallelism is underscored by verbal echoes in 1305–7 and 1367–71:

sic *alid ex alio* peperit discordia tristis  
horribile humanis quod gentibus esset in armis,  
*inque dies* belli terroribus addidit augmen.

So grim strife brought forth one thing after another to cause terror to the races of men in battle, and day by day the horrors of war increased.

inde *aliam atque aliam* culturam dulcis agelli  
temptabant fructusque feros mansuescere terra  
cernebant indulgendo blandeque colendo.  
*inque dies* magis in montem succedere silvas  
cogebant.

Then they tried out one way after another of cultivating their beloved fields, and saw how the wild fruits grew tame on their land with care and gentle cultivation. And day by day they compelled the woodlands to retreat further into the mountains.

This diptych expresses something fundamental to Lucretius' view of the human condition: all cultural developments have the potential for either

<sup>45</sup> These tensions are well brought out by Boyle (1979), who, however, tends to adopt a more 'pessimistic' reading of the poem than I would be inclined to do. Cf. also Tarrant (1997).



negative or positive use, and material 'progress' is of no value in itself. Metallurgy is potentially at the service either of 'grim strife' or of 'the cultivation of beloved fields'; only Epicurean *ratio* can tell us how true happiness is to be attained. In Virgil's finale, however, it is much less clear what (if anything) can save us from the destructive forces of war. Here, as in Lucretius, the peaceful arts of agriculture are vulnerable to the aggressive side of human nature: fields are fertilized with human blood (491f.), sickles are beaten into swords (508). These images of the perversion of agriculture through war recall Lucretius' account of the advance of bronze and iron:

aere solum terrae tractabant, aereque belli  
 miscebant fluctus et vulnera vasta serebant  
 et pecus atque agros adimebant . . .  
 . . .  
 inde minutatim processit ferreus ensis  
 versaue in opprobrium species est falcis aenae,  
 et ferro coepere solum proscindere terrae  
 exaequataque sunt creperi certamina belli.

5.1289-96

With bronze they worked the surface of the earth, with bronze stirred up the tempest of war and sowed devastating wounds, seizing flocks and lands . . . then the iron sword advanced little by little, and the bronze sickle became an object of scorn; they began to cut the surface of the earth with iron, and the struggles of wavering war were made equal.

Lucretius' warriors 'sow' wounds and seize flocks and lands, rather than cultivating them; these images of the 'misappropriation of metals for death rather than life'<sup>46</sup> lie behind *Geo.* 1.491f. So, too, the choice between creativity and destruction which is implicit in the parallel phrases *ferreus ensis* ('iron sword') and *falcis aenae* ('bronze sickle') in lines 1293 and 1294 of Lucretius' account, and in the chiasmic pattern war – agriculture – agriculture – war in 1293–6, is vividly condensed in the Virgilian passage, in which the sickle is actually converted into a sword. But in Virgil's version, it is much less clear whether the fault lies in our stars (or the will of the gods) or in ourselves. Like the weather signs established by Jupiter to help the farmer (351–5), the portents which foretell the outbreak of civil war after the murder of Julius Caesar (464–88) function on one level as a warning; but it is not clear that the

<sup>46</sup> Segal (1986), p. 15.

citizens of Rome are in any position to act upon it. The portents themselves contribute to the destruction of the agricultural landscape (the eruption of Aetna described in 471–3 destroys the fields of Sicily; the flooding Eridanus carries away flocks and their stalls (483)),<sup>47</sup> and the clash of armies at Philippi seems as inevitable as the clash of ‘armies’ of storm-clouds in 1.318.<sup>48</sup> Civil strife is both crime and punishment, and warnings of war blend imperceptibly with war itself. The poet appeals briefly in 500–2 to the notion of inherited guilt; but the reproachful tone of the phrases *nec fuit indignum superis* (‘nor did it seem unfitting to the gods above’, 491) and *saltem . . . ne prohibete* (‘at least do not prevent . . .’, 500–1) suggests that the punishment is incommensurate with the crime. Any such explanation seems increasingly inadequate, as war breeds more war and the chariot of state careers out of control (509–14). On the other hand, even if civil war is seen as a purely human phenomenon, doubt is still shed on the idea that it can be finally abolished, since aggression and violence are depicted elsewhere as essential to the farmer’s vocation, as well as to the warrior’s. The sword and the sickle may be antithetical in this passage, but elsewhere the farmer’s tools are themselves *arma* (‘weapons’), and farming is portrayed as a war against the destructive forces of nature.<sup>49</sup> Admittedly, we glimpse in 493–7 the possibility that at some time in the future agriculture will triumph over war, just as war is now triumphing over agriculture.<sup>50</sup> One day, the ploughman working the land where the battle of Philippi took place will uncover rusty javelins, empty helmets and the bones of fallen warriors: the farmer will still be cultivating his fields when the Civil Wars are so long past as to have become the stuff of legend. And yet there is some ambivalence even here about the relative value of war and agriculture: on the one hand, the juxtaposition of *gravibus rastris* (‘heavy hoes’) with *galeas inanis* (‘empty helmets’) suggests that the farmer’s work (though laborious) is somehow more real, more enduring than that of the warrior; on the other hand, the

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Lyne (1974).

<sup>48</sup> The same verb, *concurrere* (‘clash’), is used in both instances. There are also more general correspondences between the two passages: the storm in 316–34 is described in language suggesting a battle (esp. *ventorum proelia*, ‘battles of the winds’, 318; see further pp. 68–9 below), while – as Lyne points out – the outbreak of war is here described in terms which suggest a storm (*tumescere*, ‘swell’, is used of literal bad weather in 357). Mars’ rampage in 511 parallels the role of Jupiter in the earlier storm (328–33).

<sup>49</sup> See further ch. 7 below.

<sup>50</sup> It is tempting to see the contrast between the perversion of agriculture by war in 491f. and 508 and the triumph of agriculture over war in the passage under discussion as a Virgilian reworking of the Lucretian diptych discussed above.

ploughman's wonder at the huge bones which he has unearthed tends to magnify the warrior into a figure of heroic legend.<sup>51</sup>

From this vision of the future, Virgil turns back to the horrors of the present with the prayer of 498–502. The theme of Octavian's deification recurs here, but the tone is very different from that of the proem. Earlier, the future god was hailed as a guarantor of peace and prosperity; the present passage, by contrast, sheds doubt on his ability to control the chaotic forces of civil war. The poet appeals to the gods of Rome not to snatch Octavian away from the earth until he has had a chance to put an end to the violence which is presently raging throughout the world. The prayer is couched as a compliment – Octavian is too good for this corrupt world, even for 'mortal triumphs'; but it also expresses the fear that he may ultimately prove unable (or too short-lived) to bring Rome's bloody civil wars to an end.<sup>52</sup>

The same fear is embodied in the closing simile of the runaway chariot of war. The rather vague connective phrase *ut cum* ('just as when', 512) leaves it to the reader to determine the identity of the charioteer, but it is easy to see a parallel between his vain struggle to control his plunging horses and Octavian's attempts to quell the violent forces of civil war.<sup>53</sup> If we choose to make this identification, a number of interesting consequences follow. First, the juxtaposition of the chariot simile with the image of the sun in mourning (466–8) suggests an implicit reference to the myth of Phaethon: the sun mourns Julius Caesar's death just as Helios mourned his son's premature end.<sup>54</sup> In this instance, however, the dead Caesar is himself the (adoptive) father of the struggling charioteer; and in

<sup>51</sup> The 'huge bones' of line 497 suggest the Homeric (and later) notion that the heroes of the past were taller and stronger than the men of today (see e.g. *Il.* 5.303f. and 12.381–3, Hdt. 1.68, Pliny, *N.H.* 7.73f., Aulus Gellius, *Noct. Att.* 3.10.11).

<sup>52</sup> For political uncertainty in the early years of Octavian's rule, see e.g. Zanker (1988), pp. 90f. Cf. also Tarrant (1997), pp. 176f.

<sup>53</sup> This seems to be the implication of Servius' comments *ad loc.* Cf. also Dewar (1988 and 1990) and Lyne (1974), pp. 51–3 and 64–6 and (1987), pp. 139f. There are also significant resonances with the series of chariot images elsewhere in the poem, discussed on pp. 188–92 below.

<sup>54</sup> Ovid describes how Helios refuses to give light to the world while mourning his son's death (*Met.* 2.329–31 and 381–5); notably, the resulting darkness is compared to an eclipse (382). (Ovid's source for this element of his story is discussed by Bömer (1969) *ad loc.* and Diggle (1970), pp. 194–7.) The reference to Eridanus in 482 also brings the Phaethon myth to mind, since the river was traditionally the site of his fall to earth (see e.g. Eur. *Hipp.* 737–41, Ap. Rhod. *Arg.* 4.597–600). Caesar's catasterism may provide a further link with Phaethon, who is identified by later sources (Nonnus 38.424–31; Claud. *De Cons. VI Honorii* 172) with the constellation Auriga. The secondary association between Caesar and Helios is perhaps reinforced by the detail – recorded by Suetonius (*Iul.* 82) – that the dying Caesar covered his face as his fell (cf. *caput . . . nitidum . . . texit*, '[the sun] veiled his shining head', *Geo.* 1.467).

fact there are hints that the veiled sun of 466–8 is also to be *identified* with Caesar, who was ‘extinguished’ or ‘eclipsed’ by death (*exstincto*, 466). This last point suggests yet a further link with Lucretius, who applies the same verb to the death of his hero Epicurus, whose glory lives on, even though his light has been extinguished (*cuius et extincti . . . | . . . iam ad caelum gloria fertur*, 6.7f.).<sup>55</sup>

Implicitly, then, Caesar is compared simultaneously with both Phaethon and Epicurus, and also linked with his ‘son’ Octavian, who succeeds him in the Phaethon role. The implications of this network of allusions are hard to pin down, but seem at the very least to call into question the golden future so confidently forecast in the proem. Will Octavian escape his ‘father’s’ fate? Will he succeed in controlling the chariot of state, and ascend to heaven like a *successful* Phaethon, whose everlasting glory will surpass that of Lucretius’ hero? Or will he play out his mythical role to its inevitable end? These uncertainties prepare the reader for the finale to book 2, where an alternative solution to the problems of political strife and civil war is proposed – a solution, however, that is fraught with difficulties of its own.

Like book 1, book 2 begins on a confident and uncomplicated note. The dark tones of the first finale give way to a new beginning: *hactenus arborum cultus et sidera caeli; | nunc te, Bacche, canam* (‘thus far the cultivation of the fields and the stars of heaven; now I will sing of you, Bacchus’, 2.1–2). Bacchus is invoked as a god of plenty and fertility who, like the gods of the first proem, benevolently bestows his gifts (*muneribus*, 5) on his human worshippers. There are echoes of the providential, omnipresent Zeus of Aratus: *tuis hic omnia plena | muneribus* (‘here everything is filled with your gifts’, 4f.) recalls Aratus’ second line, μεστὰὶ δὲ Διὸς πᾶσαι μὲν ἀγυιαί (‘all the streets are full of Zeus’).<sup>56</sup> Again, too, we have a kind of reversal of Lucretius, who appropriates traditional hymnic forms in praise of his own ‘deity’, Epicurus:

<sup>55</sup> For Epicurus a solar figure, see also 3.1f. and esp. 3.1042–4, with Gale (1994a), pp. 202–6. Lucretius’ solar imagery probably has connexions with the solar iconography of Hellenistic ruler cult, which was subsequently adopted by Julius Caesar and his successors (see Weinstock (1971), pp. 381f., Wilhelm (1986)); the two sources converge in the Virgilian image. The vocabulary of *Geo.* 1.467 is also distantly reminiscent of Lucretius’ scientific account of eclipses in 5.753–5 (esp. *altum caput*, ‘[the moon’s] high head’, 754); with the Romans’ ‘fear of eternal night’ in 468, cf. *DRN* 5.980f.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. also Virgil’s translation of Aratus’ opening lines in *Ecl.* 3.60: *ab Iove principium Musae: Iovis omnia plena* (‘from Jupiter begin, o Muses; for everything is full of Jupiter’).

*tu pater es, rerum inventor, tu patria nobis  
suppeditas praecepta, tuisque ex, inclute, chartis,  
floriferis ut apes in saltibus omnia libant,  
omnia nos itidem depascimur aurea dicta.*

DRN 3.9–12

You are our Father, the discoverer of truth; you offer us a father's precepts, and from your pages, o renowned one, just as bees sip from all the flowers of the meadow, we drink in all your golden words.

Lucretius' use of anaphora and of the epithet *pater* ('father') creates a hymnic style;<sup>57</sup> this is reproduced by Virgil, but in a more conventional context. Once again, the gods are restored to the role from which Lucretius had ejected them.

Again, though, ambiguities become increasingly apparent as we read further into the book. Like Lucretius' Venus (who is also distantly recalled in this poem<sup>58</sup>), Bacchus has another side to his character. Venus (as personification of nature) is a destroyer as well as a creator; and, as goddess of sexuality, she shows her ugly side in Lucretius' attack on *amor* at the end of DRN 4.<sup>59</sup> In Virgil's case, Bacchus is shown at the end of the book to have a dangerous aspect:

Bacchus et ad culpam causas dedit: ille furentis  
Centauros leto domuit, Rhoecumque Pholumque  
et magno Hylaeum Lapithis cratere minantem. 2.455–7

Bacchus has even given grounds for censure: he tamed in death the frenzied Centaurs, Rhoecus and Pholus and Hylaeus who threatened the Lapiths with a great wine-bowl.

The phrase *Baccheia dona* ('gifts of Bacchus') in the preceding line picks up *tuis muneribus* ('your gifts') from the poem: the gods may give peace and

<sup>57</sup> For parallels, see Kenney (1971) on 3.9–10 and 11–13 and Nisbet and Hubbard (1970) on Horace, *Carm.* 1.12.47.

<sup>58</sup> Compare again the anaphora *te . . . te . . . tuum, tibi . . . tibi* ('you . . . you . . . you . . . you, to you . . . to you') in DRN 1.6–9; more specifically, Venus (like Bacchus) fills all things with her presence and calls forth new growth from the earth: *terras frugiferentis | concelebras* ('you fill the grain-rich earth', 3f.) ~ *tuis hic omnia plena | muneribus* ('here everything is filled with your gifts', *Geo.* 2.4f.); *tibi suavis daedala tellus | summittit flores* ('for you the earth, sweet artificer, brings forth flowers', 7f.) ~ *tibi pampineo gravidus autumnus | floret ager* ('for you the fruitful field blooms with autumn vine-shoots', *Geo.* 2.5f.). In general, Virgil's evocation of autumn complements Lucretius' image of the arrival of spring.

<sup>59</sup> Note especially 4.1058: *haec Venus est nobis* ('this is our Venus'). For Nature as creator and destroyer, see esp. 1.56f. and 2.1116f. On the gradual replacement of the Venus of the poem by the more impersonal figure of *natura*, see Clay (1983), pp. 226–34 and Gale (1994a), pp. 211–14.

plenty, but their gifts also have a darker side. The framing of the book by these two passages again suggests the Lucretian view of nature as cyclical and two-sided, as both creative and destructive. But whereas Epicurus is presented by Lucretius as one who can enable his disciples to transcend these ambiguities and achieve untroubled peace, Virgil's farmer is dependent on gods who share the ambiguity of the natural cycle.

The finale to book 2 appears at first glance to revert to the cheerful mood of the proem. But here too there are complications. If the end of book 1 tended to call into question the possibility of a political solution to the problems of human violence and civil war, the present passage seems to come close to proclaiming the Lucretian ideal of withdrawal from political life and the attainment of self-sufficient contentment. Yet the position of both farmer and poet in this finale is ambiguous. Epicurean *ataraxia* (mental tranquillity) is combined with features which seem to belong rather to the mythical Golden Age; neither seems wholly compatible with the Roman myth of the tough, hard-working peasant, which also has a contribution to make here.

The finale as a whole takes the form of a highly rhetorical *synkrisis* between agricultural and city life. The first section (458–74) combines elements which evoke, in turn, the Hesiodic and Aratean vision of the Golden Age, the Lucretian (or pastoral)<sup>60</sup> ideal of *otium* ('leisure') and *quies* ('peace'), and the Roman stereotype of the virtuous, hardworking countryman. The paragraph is framed by Aratean allusions: lines 459–60 recall the account of the Golden Age in *Phaen.* 108–13,<sup>61</sup> and the gradual departure of *Iustitia* ('Justice', 473f.) is evidently based on Aratus' more extended narrative (*Phaen.* 115–36). Virgil's countrymen are both honest themselves and reliant on the 'just' earth, which gives them fair reward for the effort they have 'invested'.<sup>62</sup> By contrast, the wealth of the

<sup>60</sup> The conjunction between Lucretian and pastoral elements is not fortuitous: pastoral poetry has close links with Epicureanism from the start (see e.g. Rosenmeyer (1969), esp. pp. 42–4; Coleman (1977), pp. 6f.).

<sup>61</sup> *procul discordibus armis* ('far from the clash of arms') ~ οὐδὲ διακρίσιος πολυμεφέος οὐδὲ κυδοιμοῦ ('there were no wrangling quarrels nor din of battle', *Phaen.* 109); *fundit humo facilem victum iustissima tellus* ('the just earth pours forth an easy livelihood from her soil') ~ μυρία πάντα παρείχε Δίκη, δώτειρα δίκαιων ('Justice, who gives what is right, provided everything in abundance', *Phaen.* 113). Virgil also looks back through Aratus to his Hesiodic model (cf. *Op.* 117f., καρπὸν δ' ἔφερε ζείδωρος ἄρουρα | αὐτομάτῃ, 'the bountiful earth brought forth fruit of her own accord'). For parallels with the demythologized version of the Golden Age in book 5 of the *DRN*, see pp. 171–2 below.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Servius *ad loc.*, and Xen. *Cyr.* 8.3.38, Cic. *Sen.* 51, Tib. 2.6.22, Ov. *R.A.* 173, *Fast.* 1.694, *Pont.* 1.5.26, Manil. 5.273 for this common *topos*.

city-dweller is described in terms suggestive of decadence and corruption.<sup>63</sup> The language here is close to that of the proem to *DRN* 2, where unnecessary luxuries are similarly contrasted with simple, rustic pleasures;<sup>64</sup> and the phrase *secura quies* ('untroubled peace', 467) is strongly reminiscent of the untroubled peace of the Lucretian sage in his 'well-fortified stronghold of wisdom' (*DRN* 2.7f.). The *locus amoenus* of 468–71 recalls the idealized landscape of pastoral poetry: Lucretian *quies* blends with the *otium* of the herdsmen of the *Eclogues* in their fantasy world of shady trees and cool waters.<sup>65</sup> But the pastoral ideal collides abruptly with the traditional Roman image of the hard-working farmer in 472f.: *patiens operum exiguoque adsueta* ('hardened to labour and well-used to scarcity') recalls (though the formulation here is more positive in tone) the 'aetiology of labor' in book 1, where the farmer is subject to *labor improbus et duris urgens in rebus egestas* ('insatiable toil and the pressure of want when times are hard') – a far cry from the dreamy idleness and enjoyment of natural beauty celebrated in the preceding lines. Even more striking is the mention of *sacra deum* ('rites of the gods', 473), which clashes sharply with the Lucretian echoes in 461–7.

Not only is the compromise between Aratean, Lucretian and Roman ideals in these lines a far from easy one, but it also clashes in obvious ways with the depiction of agricultural life in other parts of the poem. I have already noted the inconsistency between the images of pastoral *otium* in 468–71 and the recurrent theme of the farmer's unceasing *labor* which is recalled in line 472 (and cf. *labor*, 514, *nec requies*, 'without rest', 516). The idea that the just earth gives fair recompense for the farmer's efforts is also called into question by several passages in other parts of the poem: threats to the farmer's livelihood are ever present, particularly in books 1 (pests, degeneration and storms) and 3 (the danger of disease, most dramatically represented in the devastation wreaked by the Noric plague); and the reference to the departure of Justice from the earth (474) reminds us that the Golden Age – the age of *facilis victus* ('an easy livelihood') – lies far in

<sup>63</sup> Note especially the emotive *inlusas* ('tricked out'), *veneno* ('potion'), *corruptitur* ('tainted') in 464–6. See further Klingner (1931).

<sup>64</sup> The syntactic structure of lines 461–7 (*si non . . . nec . . . nec . . . at*, 'if not . . . nor . . . nor . . . yet') closely parallels that of *DRN* 2.24–9 (*si non . . . nec . . . nec . . . cum tamen*, 'if not . . . nor . . . nor . . . and yet'). Lucretius' alfresco meal also finds its counterpart in the festival scene of *Geo.* 2.527–31 (esp. *fususque per herbam*, 'sprawling on the grass' ~ *prostrati in gramine molli*, 'stretched out on the soft grass', *DRN* 2.29) – though the libation to Bacchus is an un-Lucretian element.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Mynors on 468, 469, 470 for parallels, and for a convincing argument that this is very much a city-dweller's view of country life.

the past, however nearly the life of the modern farmer may approximate to it.

The movement of the first section of the finale is roughly recapitulated in 495–540, but with more emphasis on the ‘realistic’ element of agricultural *labor*. There is no room here for *latis otia fundis* (‘idling amidst the broad farmlands’) or *molles sub arbore somni* (‘easy sleep beneath a tree’): the farmer has to work hard to sustain himself and his family, though festival days provide an opportunity for relaxation (by contrast, again, with the poet’s earlier advice, 1.268–75). Here too, there are Lucretian echoes: the critique of urban violence and futile ambition in 495–512 recalls the proems to *DRN* 2 and 3,<sup>66</sup> but what Lucretius attributes ultimately to the fear of death (3.63f.) and to lack of philosophical understanding becomes for Virgil the antithesis of rural simplicity and piety. Again, too, the Lucretian echoes clash with phrases evocative of the mythical Golden Age: the spontaneity motif in 500f. is reinforced by the references to acorns and arbutus (520; associated with the Golden Age in 1.148f.), and by the pictures of well-fed pigs and cows in 520 and 524f. (recalling the goats of *Eclogue* 4.21f: *ipsae lacte domum referent distenta capellae | ubera*, ‘the she-goats come home of their own accord, their udders swollen with milk’).<sup>67</sup> It is noteworthy, too, that the images of abundance in these lines echo a Lucretian passage in which the poet celebrates the creative aspect of the natural cycle:

*ubera vaccae*  
*lactea demittunt, pinguesque in gramine laeto*  
*inter se adversis luctantur cornibus haedi.*

Geo. 2.524–6

The cows’ milky udders hang down, and on the rich grass sleek goats  
contend amongst themselves with butting horns.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. esp. 496 and 510 with *DRN* 3.71 (the murderous brothers here are something of a commonplace, going back as far as Hesiod (*Op.* 184; cf. also *Cat.* 64.399), but the phrasing of 510 is particularly close to Lucretius’ line; cf. Macrob. 6.2.15 and Dionigi (1977)); 507 with *DRN* 3.70f.; and 511f. with *DRN* 3.48f. Compare also the contemptuous reference to *populi fasces* (‘the *fasces* [consular insignia] of the people’) in 495 with the futile ambition of the political candidate in *DRN* 3.996, who *petere a populo fascis* . . . *imbibit* (‘is determined to seek *fasces* from the people’).

<sup>67</sup> Cf. also Hor. *Epod.* 16.49f., and contrast Lucretius’ rationalized version in *DRN* 5.937f. (*quod sol atque imbres dederant, quod terra crearat | sponte sua* (‘what sun and rain had given, what the earth had created of its own accord’) ~ *quos rami fructus, quos ipsa volentia rura | sponte tulere sua* (‘the fruits which the boughs – which the land itself – have willingly brought forth of their own accord’), *Geo.* 2.500f.).



hinc fessae pecudes *pingui* per pabula *laeta*  
 corpora deponunt, et candens *lacteus* umor  
*uberibus* manat distentis. DRN 1.257–9

And so flocks wearied by their own weight rest their bodies in the rich pasture, and the white milky liquor drips from their swollen udders.

But Lucretius concludes by reminding us that death is the necessary complement of birth and growth: *quando alid ex alio reficit natura nec ullam | rem gigni patitur nisi morte adiuta aliena* ('since nature makes one thing from another and allows nothing to be born without the aid of another's death', 263f.). Virgil, on the other hand, suppresses any reference to the destructive aspect of the natural cycle – or rather, reserves it for the end of the next book, where death and decay are allowed to dominate, just as peace and creativity dominate here.<sup>68</sup> By separating (and exaggerating) the two aspects of the cycle in this way, Virgil creates a quite different emphasis from that of Lucretius' poem, and offers the reader a problem (or set of problems) rather than a solution: on the one hand, the old Roman ideal of frugality, piety and virtue is set against the philosophical ideal of *ataraxia*; on the other, death is portrayed not as a matter for tranquil acceptance, but as something horrific and tragic. The finale to book 2 also looks back to the finale to book 1: the ploughman in 2.513 recalls the ploughman in the almost identical line, 1.494.<sup>69</sup> Again, this cross-reference is ambiguous in its implications: either we could see the farmer in the first finale as asserting the continuity of agriculture despite all obstacles, as representing the persistence of the ideal existence portrayed in the second finale; or we could read the backward reference here as calling into question the idea that the life of the farmer can really remain uncontaminated by the horrors of the Iron Age, by recalling the perversion of agriculture at the end of book 1. This second reading may receive support from a third Aratean reference which again picks up the opening of the finale and forms a larger frame enclosing the entire passage: it becomes clear in 536–40 that the Golden Age lies in the past and has given way to the Iron Age of Jupiter.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, the character of the Golden Race as

<sup>68</sup> Thomas notes ironic cross-references between 2.515 and 3.525 ('deserving bullocks' will die of the plague, despite their virtuous character and the farmer's care) and between 2.525 and 3.494 (where *laetae herbae*, 'rich grass', becomes the scene of death).

<sup>69</sup> Note also the reference to the forging of swords in 540, which recalls 1.508, where sickles were beaten into swords.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. *Phaen.* 130–2.

described here seems to contain the seeds of its own destruction: the life of the farmer resembles that of Golden Saturn, but also that of the tough Sabines, of mighty Etruria and of Romulus and Remus. The rustic toughness associated with an age before the advent of war is also the quality which enabled Etruria and Rome to grow great – through, precisely, their military prowess. Thus, the ideal of rural peace achieved through agricultural *labor* is problematized both within the finale itself and by cross-references to the first and third finales, even as Virgil seems to advance it as an alternative to the Epicurean *ataraxia* of Lucretius.

The clash between different ideals and traditions embodied in the first section of the finale leads into more explicit reflexions on the poet's aims, which form a central panel between the two passages contrasting city and country. Virgil both expresses admiration for and distances himself from the traditions of scientific didactic which are invoked in lines 477–82 in terms that suggest both Aratus and Lucretius.<sup>71</sup> This tradition is rejected with a mock-modesty reminiscent of the *recusatio*: the language of lines 483f. ironically echoes both Lucretius and his didactic model Empedocles.<sup>72</sup> But there is a kind of disingenuousness in the alternative which Virgil substitutes for the rejected scientific tradition: the imagery of lines 485–9, with its cool rivers, shady trees and Greek place names, once again suggests the idealized countryside of the *Eclogues* rather than the hard-won agricultural landscape of the *Georgics*.<sup>73</sup> In the *makarismos* which immedi-

<sup>71</sup> *dulces ante omnia Musae* ('the Muses, sweeter than all else', 475) ~ Μοῦσαι | μείλιχαι μάλα πᾶσαι ('all you sweetest Muses', *Phaen.* 16f.); *caelique vias et sidera monstrent* ('and may they show me the ways of heaven and the stars', 477) ~ ἐμοί γε μὲν ἀστέρας εἰπεῖν . . . εὐχομένω τεκμήρατε πᾶσαν ἀοιδὴν ('according to my prayer, direct my song as I tell the stars', *Phaen.* 17f); *ingenti percussus amore* ('struck by overwhelming love, 476) ~ *sed acri* | *percussit thyrso laudis spes magna meum cor* | *et simul incussit suavem* [cf. *dulces*, 475] *mi in pectus amorem* | *Musarum* [cf. *Musae*, 475] ('but high hope of praise has struck my breast sharply with its wand and wounded my heart with sweet love of the Muses', *DRN* 1.922–5). The language in the list of topics in 477–82 is generally Lucretian: cf. esp. *DRN* 5.751 for *defectus solis* . . . *lunaque labores* ('eclipses of the sun and darkening of the moon'); 6.535–607 (esp. 577) for *unde tremor terris* ('what causes the earth to tremble'); and 5.680–704 (esp. 699f.) for *tantum Oceano properent se tingere soles* | *hiberni* etc. ('why the sun is so eager in winter to plunge into the Ocean'). See further Hardie (1986), pp. 35–40.

<sup>72</sup> The idea that the blood around the heart is the seat of the mind is Empedoclean (fr. 105 D–K; cf. Cic. *Tusc.* 1.19). With *naturae accedere partis* ('to draw near to these realms of nature'), cf. *DRN* 1.927, *iuvat integros accedere fontis* ('it pleases me to draw near to untouched springs') (and see Hardie (1986), pp. 38f. on *naturae* . . . *partis*).

<sup>73</sup> Thomas argues (*ad* 483–4) that the lines refer specifically to the *Eclogues* rather than the *Georgics*, and that the whole passage opposes didactic and pastoral (rather than scientific and agricultural didactic). But cf. 3.43–5, where the reference must be to the *Georgics* despite the Greek place names; and note *agrestis* ('rustic') in 493 (Pan, Silvanus and the Nymphs were in fact invoked with the other rustic gods in the proem to book 1). The *Georgics* itself has a

ately follows these lines, Lucretius (or his reader)<sup>74</sup> is felicitated because his knowledge of the causes of things has put him beyond the reach of fear and fate; but this knowledge is set against another kind, the mystic 'knowledge' of the gods which also brings salvation.<sup>75</sup> The verb *novit* ('knows') echoes *norint* ('if they knew') in the opening line of the finale, and suggests that the poet sees his role in the *Georgics* as bringing this kind of knowledge (knowledge of the gods, and consequent understanding of his own blessed state) to the farmer. But this is only half the story. The farmer may be close to the gods, but such nearness is not always a blessing; and, unlike Lucretius' 'knowledge of the causes of things', the knowledge offered by Virgil cannot free his reader from *metus* ('fear') or *labor*.<sup>76</sup> The salvation offered by Lucretius is set against a thoroughly idealized vision of the blessings of agricultural life; but tensions both within the finale itself, and between the finale and other parts of the poem, tend to complicate the picture. Virgil can only challenge Lucretius by offering a partial and tendentious vision of rustic life and of the relationship between the farmer and his gods. Yet the fact that the tensions are so obvious here might also be seen as a challenge to Lucretius' faith in the power of knowledge and *ratio*: is it really possible to escape *labor* and *metus* at all? Or are Lucretius' claims as exaggerated as those which Virgil offers as substitute?

The discussion of the poet's role in this passage also needs to be read in conjunction with the rather different claims which are made in the proem to book 3, where poetry and politics seem to work in harmony: in

pastoral aspect (particularly in book 3); the coexistence of this idealized view of the countryside with the more 'realistic' emphasis on the toil and difficulties confronting the farmer is one aspect of the poem's polyphonic character.

<sup>74</sup> Thomas again denies that the lines have a specifically Lucretian reference (cf. also Sellar (1897), p. 201, Ross (1975), pp. 29–31, Boyancé (1980), Novara (1982)). But the concentration of Lucretian language in the lines (see pp. 9–10 above, and cf. Hardie (1986), p. 40 and n. 20) makes it difficult to take them any other way. Furthermore, the connexion between the understanding of natural phenomena and the dismissal of *metus* ('fear') is specifically Epicurean, as Barchiesi (1982), p. 60, n. 23 points out.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. p. 9, n. 21 above. Critics have disagreed as to the identity of *ille* ('the man') in 493: is this the poet or the farmer? There seems in fact to be a kind of slide from one to the other: the juxtaposition with the specific reference to Lucretius in 490–2 suggests that *ille* should refer to the poet; but by the time we get to 513, the farmer is explicitly the subject. The intervening lines seem thus to apply to both poet and farmer (by the common convention whereby the poet is represented as doing what he describes as being done). Barchiesi (1982), pp. 64f. neatly sidesteps the problem by suggesting that the *felix* ('happy man') and the *fortunatus* ('fortunate man') are the ideal readers of Lucretius and the *Georgics* respectively, as in the Hesiodic *makarismos* quoted on p. 11, n. 23 above.

<sup>76</sup> See chapter 5 below.

celebrating the victories of Octavian, the poet wins his own metaphorical triumph. We are offered yet another alternative to Epicurean salvation: the defeat of *Invidia* ('Envy') in 3.37–9 recalls (and reverses) the defeat of fear and fate by the philosophical poet in 2.490–2.77. The extended metaphor of lines 8–12 also recalls the triumphant mental 'flight' of Epicurus depicted in *DRN* 1.62–79; but where the philosopher's triumph is presented as a *challenge* to conventional Roman ideology, Virgil portrays poetic and military glory as interdependent rather than opposed to each other.<sup>78</sup> Once again, the poet seems to express his faith in a political solution to the problems which for Lucretius could only be solved by eschewing ambition and public life altogether.

On the poetic level, too, the proem expresses a triumphant consciousness of success in mastering a venerable and many-sided literary tradition. The seamless welding together of disparate models in this passage is particularly striking at the centre of a poem where the voices of tradition are so rarely harmoniously combined. Other programmatic passages, however, present us with a less confident view of the poet's control of his material and of his relationship with political power.

The discussion of poetics in the great central block formed by the finale to book 2 and the proem to book 3 is already anticipated in the opening lines of book 2, where the invocation of Bacchus has a programmatic dimension. The phrase *te, Bacche, canam* ('I will sing of you, Bacchus') in line 2 is picked up in the digression on the origins of the drama in 380–92 (*et te, Bacche, vocant per carmina laeta*, 'and they call on you, Bacchus, in their joyful songs', 388). Virgil's own poetry is of a 'lighter' kind, though still associated with Bacchus, who is called on to remove his tragic buskins and join the poet in treading the grapes (7f.).<sup>79</sup> This implicit comment on genre and stylistic level looks forward to the more explicit reflexions on the relationship between heroic epic and 'Callimachean' didactic in the finale and the proems to books 3 and 4. But the invocation of Bacchus as inspiring deity can also be linked to the so-called *vituperatio vitis* or 'censure of the vine' which immediately precedes the finale. If Bacchus is depicted in the proem as a benevolent and cooperative god, he is also the bringer of madness and death. This duality has troubling implications for the poet's role in society and the nature of poetic inspiration. Is poetry to

<sup>77</sup> See Thomas *ad loc.*, and p. 189 below.

<sup>78</sup> Echoes of *DRN* 1.62–79 are analysed in detail in chapter 1 (p. 13 above); on Epicurus' 'heroism' as a challenge to Roman military ideology, see pp. 235–40 below.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Thomas *ad loc.*

be seen as a force allied with the order and control ideally exerted by the farmer and the politician, or as an irrational product of *furor*, the frenzy of poetic inspiration? This question is explored from different angles in the series of programmatic passages which punctuate the poem: from the proems to books 2 and 3, through the Lucretian 'second proem' in 3.284–94,<sup>80</sup> to the Aristaeus epyllion and the poet's *sphragis* or 'signature' in the closing lines of book 4, the social function and value of poetry are represented in a variety of different ways. The act of poetic composition is seen now as a matter of controlled artistry, now of ecstatic divine possession; now as closely associated with and now as antithetical to the activities of the statesman and the farmer.

These issues will be explored more fully at the end of chapter 5, where I focus on the poet's artistic endeavours and their relation to the *labores* of the farmer; for now, let us return to book 3. The Lucretian echoes in the proem and 'second proem' mark this out at the most Lucretian (or anti-Lucretian) section of the poem. The book as a whole is structured as a kind of *DRN* in miniature, with its two programmatic proems and its central digression on the power of *amor* (cf. the finale to *DRN* 4, near to the centre of Lucretius' poem). These parallels culminate in the Noric cattle plague at the end of the book, which is Virgil's closest and most sustained imitation of any Lucretian passage. The general framework of the Virgilian finale adheres closely to Lucretius' account of the plague of Athens in *DRN* 6.1138–1286, and the symptoms which afflict Virgil's animals are all based (*mutatis mutandis*) on the symptoms of the human sufferers in the earlier poem.<sup>81</sup> At the same time, the model is

<sup>80</sup> The Virgilian lines especially recall *DRN* 1.922–30, where Lucretius similarly depicts himself as 'possessed' by love of the Muses, which inspires him to enter regions untrodden by previous poets; for a detailed comparison, see p. 191 below.

<sup>81</sup> Broadly speaking, Virgil's account runs in parallel with Lucretius', though there is some redistribution of detail. The 'aetiology' in 478–81 corresponds to *DRN* 6.1138–44 (incorporating echoes of the more general account in 1090–1137); the symptomology in 482–5 combines *DRN* 6.1145–53 with 1163–77 and 1199–1203; the sick horse's symptoms are drawn mainly from 6.1182–98 (with some echoes of 1144–77, 1199–1203 and 1226–9), and the death of the plough-ox can be compared with 6.1243–6 (where grief and actual sickness are similarly combined); 531–6, dealing with the social effects of the plague, is based on 6.1252–77. At this point there is some dislocation of the Lucretian order: the effects of the plague on wild animals (537–47) and the helplessness of the medical profession (548–50) are promoted to this climactic position from an earlier stage in Lucretius' account (6.1219–24 and 1179–81 respectively). The Lucretian order is then resumed: the rampage of Tisiphone in 551–5 has parallels with 6.1235–45, and both accounts end with a reference to burial practices (556–66; 6.1278–86). For more detailed analysis, see Klepl (1967), pp. 53–77; West (1979); Harrison (1979), pp. 6–23; Farrell (1991), pp. 84–94.

transformed in a number of ways which radically alter its tone and implications.

The most striking difference between the two plagues lies in the degree to which the narrator involves himself and his audience in the narrative. Though Lucretius adds a psychological dimension to Thucydides' account, his version is still relatively objective: we are invited to participate only as dispassionate observers of the scene, and both the symptoms and the social effects of the plague are detailed with scientific detachment. Virgil, by contrast, offers us a much more 'subjective' narrative, explicitly inviting our sympathy with the victims of the plague (note *miseranda* ('woeful') and *miseros* ('wretched'), both close to the beginning of the finale in 478 and 483), and emphasizing the weird and inexplicable nature of the disease.<sup>82</sup> Authorial interventions in 513 and 525–30 create a mood of horror and despair, and the dying animals are described in language richly suggestive of the bizarre and uncanny. The symptoms of the disease involve a paradoxical conjunction of dry heat and excessive fluidity (482–5); domestic animals fall dead in the midst of plenty (494f.), and the denizens of earth, water and air are rejected by their natural habitats (541–7). Sacrificial ritual is corrupted, as the victim falls dead before it reaches the altar and its entrails refuse to burn (486–93). Predator and prey forgo their enmity in a weird parody of the Golden Age (537–40).<sup>83</sup> The dying animals are also described in highly anthropomorphic language, which invites the reader's sympathy and horror: this is particularly clear in the case of the plough-ox, which grieves for its 'brother' and receives a species of funeral oration (525–30) from the poet. Intertextuality reinforces the effect, if we bear in mind the fact that the symptoms which afflict Virgil's animals began life as symptoms of a human disease. The sacrificial victim which dies at the altar is described in language which strongly recalls Lucretius' Iphigenia (*DRN* 1.84–101);<sup>84</sup> and the description of the mourning ox, though based on a Lucretian passage which similarly deals with a mourning animal (2.352–65), is much more anthropomorphic in its detail.<sup>85</sup> The symptoms of the sick horse, finally, pathetically mirror the characteristics of the healthy horse as

<sup>82</sup> These aspects are well brought out by Klepl (1967), esp. pp. 58f., and West (1979).

<sup>83</sup> Cf., for example *Ed.* 4.22 and 5.60, and see further pp. 225–6 below.

<sup>84</sup> For detailed parallels, see p. 109, n. 166 below.

<sup>85</sup> As West (1979) points out, Lucretius gives us a 'cow's eye view' of fresh willows, grass and water; the details of Virgil's version (soft meadows, the clear stream in its rocky bed) are calculated rather to appeal to a human observer.

described in 75–88;<sup>86</sup> the contrast with the earlier passage again serves to deepen the reader's sense of pity.

While the dying animals are treated in very human terms, the Norici themselves seem to descend to the level of animals. Civilisation is in total collapse: farmers are deprived of the use of draft animals and even (illogically) of tools (534–6); they are also unable to use the animals' hides or fleeces for clothing – one of the most basic needs of civilised human beings.<sup>87</sup> Virgil has taken his cue from Lucretius' account of the collapse of religion and burial customs (6.1276–81),<sup>88</sup> but this element too is played up and amplified.

Virgil further modifies Lucretius' account of the plague through the insertion of material taken from other (superficially unrelated) parts of the *DRN*. I have already noted links between the death of the sacrificial victim at the altar and the sacrifice of Iphigenia, and suggested that the symptoms of both the horse and the plough-ox have parallels with the depiction of the cow searching for her lost calf – also a victim of sacrifice – in *DRN* 2.352–65. These additions have important implications for the interpretation of the role played by the gods and religion in this passage, and will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. The poet's 'epitaph' for the plough-ox also recalls both the proem to *DRN* 2 and Virgil's earlier reworking in the finale to *Georgics* 2: in all three passages, rich banquets are opposed to simple fare, and peace of mind to troublesome cares. The virtuous and self-sufficient life of the ox is precisely parallel to that of the idealized farmer or the Lucretian philosopher; but the despairing cry *quid labor aut benefacta iuvant?* ('what use are toil and good deeds?') seems to call into question the notion that *labor* brings its own rewards, and that inner peace can truly be achieved in a world where bewildering natural disasters like the plague can descend without warning on innocent and guilty alike.

A third crucial difference between the Lucretian and Virgilian plagues is their structural position within the poem as a whole. Lucretius' plague falls at the very end of his work, and the only place we can turn for consolation is back to the beginning of the poem. The reader is simply asked to accept that decay and death are the necessary complement of the

<sup>86</sup> Note especially the drooping ears and pounding hoofs (contrast lines 76 and 84 of the earlier passage); the phrase *victor equus* ('the triumphant horse', 499) recalls the animal's earlier enthusiasm for praise and victory (102, 112), now forgotten.

<sup>87</sup> Note the word *usus* ('usage') in 559 – a key term in accounts of cultural development (cf. *DRN* 5.1452; *Geo.* 1.133).

<sup>88</sup> Note also the ring-structure formed by the proem and finale of *DRN* 6: the proem deals with the rise of Athenian culture, the plague with its collapse.

birth and growth represented by Venus in the proem; the only thing that can save us from the horrors of the plague is the acceptance of Epicurus' healing message, and the realization that death is not to be feared. Virgil's plague occupies a more ambiguous position in the poem's structure. From one perspective, it both deepens the gloom and despair apparent at the end of the first book, and reverses some of the more optimistic elements in the finale to book 2. Tisiphone's rampage recalls the rampage of Mars in 1.511 (the verb *saevit*, 'rages', links the two passages); but whereas there seemed to be at least some hope that Octavian might put an end to the chaos of civil war, there is no defence at all against the plague, which frustrates all attempts at a cure (509–14, 548–50), and apparently only comes to an end with the death of all its victims.<sup>89</sup> As we have already noted, the images of devastation here also offer a striking contrast with the images of fertility at the end of book 2 (esp. 514–26), and call into question the ideal of rustic peace advanced in the earlier passage. There are strong parallels too between the symptoms of the plague and the effects of *amor*, depicted in the matching digression which forms the climax to the first half of book 3; both are depicted as devastating but uncontrollable forces inflicted on man and beast by demonic or divine powers (Venus in 267, Tisiphone in 552).<sup>90</sup> But Virgil's plague is not the end of the story; the finale to book 3 receives in its turn a kind of answer in the following book, particularly in the account of the *bougonia* and the Aristaeus epyllion with which the poem ends.<sup>91</sup> Where Lucretius ends with death – a reality which must simply be accepted by the Epicurean disciple – Virgil's concluding narrative of death and rebirth is more elusive and ambiguous in its implications.

<sup>89</sup> Ketteman (1982) suggests that the closing lines hint at an end to the plague: burial of the victims' corpses halts the spread of infection. But Virgil does not say that the disease was prevented from spreading altogether, and the evocation of deserted pasture-lands which introduces the account (474–7) implies rather that the entire stock of the Norici was wiped out.

<sup>90</sup> Both *amor* and the plague are described as 'fiery' afflictions (215, 244, 272; 479, 482, 505, 512); both cause their victims to become indifferent to their usual pursuits (216; 498f., 520–2). Note also the unnatural behaviour of animals in both 245–65 and 537–47. Cf. Ross (1987), 164–7 and 181–3. A very similar technique is used in the *Aeneid* to establish connexions between the *furor* of love and the *furor* of war: Venus' plot in book 1 has strong parallels with Allecto's activities in 7, and again the fire metaphor is used in both contexts (e.g. 1.660, 673; 4.2, 54, 68, 300, 376; 7.355f., 456f., 550, 623; for parallels between Venus and Allecto, see e.g. Lyne (1987), pp. 13–27).

<sup>91</sup> Note that both the plague and the account of the *bougonia* are preceded by a short passage locating the phenomenon in a specific region (3.474–7, 4.287–94); this structural parallel might be seen as a kind of cross-reference.



If book 3 is the most Lucretian part of the *Georgics*, the opposite, on the whole, is true of book 4. Echoes of the *DRN* are relatively few and far between.<sup>92</sup> Arguably, however, the book as a whole can be seen as responding in a broader sense to Lucretius' central concerns in the *DRN*. The miniature world of Virgil's bees has parallels with the miniature world of Lucretius' atoms: the bees have no individual identity, one is interchangeable with another and the sum (the hive) is greater than its parts. At the same time, Virgil effects a kind of reversal between microcosm and macrocosm: for Lucretius' central thesis that the death of the individual organism is merely the dissolution of its imperishable atomic components, Virgil substitutes the claim that the 'immortal' hive survives the deaths of individual bees. Despite this reversal, however, the notion that the death of each insect is insignificant in comparison with the survival of the race can be read as a response to Lucretius' insistence that death is no more than the recycling of matter. As the poet explains at the end of *DRN* 3, each of us must die so that the human race can continue:

cedit enim rerum novitate extrusa vetustas  
semper, et ex aliis aliud reparare necessest:  
nec quisquam in barathrum nec Tartara deditur atra.  
materies opus est ut crescant postera saecula;  
quae tamen omnia te vita perfuncta sequentur;  
nec minus ergo ante haec quam tu cecidere, cadentque.  
sic alid ex alio numquam desistet oriri  
vitaque mancipio nulli datur, omnibus usu.

*DRN* 3.964–71<sup>93</sup>

For the old always gives way, driven out by something new, and it is essential that one thing be created from another: nor is anyone condemned to the pit of black Tartarus. There is need of matter so that future generations can grow; and yet they will all follow you when their life is done; others have perished before, just like you, and will perish hereafter. So one thing will never cease to come into being out of another, and life is given to none as a freehold, but to all on lease.

Similarly, the bees' self-sacrificing nature allows the life of the hive to be maintained far beyond the short span of each individual (4.203–9). For

<sup>92</sup> Note, nevertheless, the fairly extensive list of verbal parallels identified by Jahn (1904); cf. also Schäfer (1996), pp. 129–43.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. 1.250–64, 2.67–79, 2.569–80.

Virgil, this communal ideal also has political implications (the bees are, on one level, miniature Romans, *parvi Quirites*).<sup>94</sup> Thus, the fourth book as a whole offers a kind of consolation for the horror of death so vividly evoked at the end of book 3, which resembles, but is also subtly different from, Lucretius' *consolatio*. The death of the individual is compensated for by the survival of the race, and a kind of immortality can be achieved on a communal, if not an individual, level. These issues are further explored, as we shall see, in the epyllion, where the value of the individual is set against the communal ideal represented by the bees, and the notions of resurrection and immortality are examined from a series of different perspectives. Thus, the finales to books 3 and 4 both respond in different ways to the finale to *DRN* 6; the finale to book 3 by intensifying the horror and darkness of the Lucretian picture; the finale to book 4 by exploring – and perhaps questioning – the notion that the continuation of life in the abstract sense can offer consolation for the inevitable death of the individual.

Like the other three books, book 4 begins on a positive note: the bees are held up for admiration as exemplary creatures, despite their diminutive size (*admiranda . . . levium spectacula rerum*, 'the marvellous spectacle of a tiny world', 4.3); the gods appear once again in the role of benefactors (honey is a 'heavenly gift', like the *munera* ('gifts') of Bacchus in the proem to book 2); and the poet is sure of his success, despite (or perhaps because of) the *tenuitas* ('slenderness') of his theme – *labor* will be rewarded by *gloria* ('glory'). Even within the proem, however, there are hints of ambivalence in the poet's handling of the bees: admirable they may be, but there is a touch of humour in the clash between the grandiose language of lines 4f. and the tiny size of the bees, emphasized in lines 3 and 6. Through the rest of the book, the bees are depicted alternately as a paradigm of human society and as remote, alien and sometimes rather ridiculous creatures. Their social organization and devotion to the hive are held up for admiration, but we are constantly reminded that the inhabitants of this little 'city' are minute and easily manipulated: the beekeeper can put an end to their 'battles' by flinging a handful of dust or pulling the wings off the leaders; a wild-olive is 'huge' from the bee's perspective (*ingens oleaster*, 20), and a trickling stream is an ocean (*tenuis rivus*, 19; *Neptuno*, 29); and the efficiency with which various tasks are allocated amongst the hive is compared with notable incongruity to the

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Cic. *Off.* 1.49–58, 3.22f and 3.27f, *Fin.* 3.63f. and Sen. *Ep.* 95.52 for service to the *commune bonum* ('common good') as an ideal.

labours of the monstrous Cyclopes (170–80). The bees' more admirable qualities include freedom from the tyranny of sex and death (197–209) – qualities which mark them as alien not only to human beings but to all other animals, since *amor* and gradual decay are otherwise universal phenomena (3.66–8, 242–4). They also have less desirable traits. The battle in 67–87 is portrayed fairly explicitly as a civil war, and has parallels with the account of Rome's civil wars in the finale to book 1.<sup>95</sup> Like Lucretius' atoms, Virgil's bees are distinctly aggressive creatures, as prone to engage in civil strife as they are to cooperate harmoniously in the defence and maintenance of the hive.<sup>96</sup> More disturbing still is their extreme devotion to the king-bee, which exceeds that of the subservient Egyptians, Parthians and Medes (210–12). The bees have no freedom or individuality; the negative side of the cooperative efficiency of their social organization is a slavish dependency on their ruler. Deprived of its head, the hive collapses into anarchy (213f.).

The themes of death, immortality and the relationship between individual and community are explored further in the Aristaeus epyllion, which is structurally parallel to Lucretius' plague. In both cases, the climactic passage is introduced casually, but opens out into a lengthy finale which explores the central issues which have dominated each work through the medium of narrative rather than didactic exposition.<sup>97</sup> Lucretius' plague is cited initially as an *exemplum* of the kind of disease that is carried by 'corrupt air' from one region to another; Aristaeus' story overtly serves as an *action* for the practice of *bougonia*. The Aristaeus story is, of course, mythological, whereas Lucretius' finale is closely based on Thucydides' account of an historical event; but the plague arguably functions as a kind of Platonic myth, a story which acts as a vehicle for the expression of moral or psychological truths.<sup>98</sup> Lucretius has gone out of his way to detach the plague from its historical context: there is no mention of the Peloponnesian War, the disaster simply happened 'once upon a time' (*quondam*, 1138) to the people of Cecrops and Pandion (1139, 1143).

<sup>95</sup> See p. 267 below.

<sup>96</sup> For metaphors of warfare and alliance in Lucretius' account of the atomic structure of the universe, see chapter 7 below.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Conte (1986), p. 139: 'It might . . . be said that the fable of Aristaeus is nothing other than a translation, into the dynamic form of a story, of the literary didacticism that underlies the whole poem and foreshadows its reception.'

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Segal (1990), pp. 191f., Gale (1994a), p. 225. On the function of Plato's myths, see especially McCabe (1992).

Thus, the episode is transformed from an historical event into an Epicurean myth – a myth devoid of supernatural elements, featuring no gods or heroes, but nevertheless capable of bearing symbolic meanings of universal application. In this sense, though Homer is on one level the main intertext for Virgil's finale,<sup>99</sup> Lucretius remains in the background right up to the end of the poem.

The contrast between the practical Aristaeus and the poet and lover Orpheus is crucial to the interpretation of Virgil's concluding myth, and reflects many of the tensions which run through the poem. Aristaeus – like the didactic addressee<sup>100</sup> – is a farmer. He specifically mentions cereal crops, trees and vines, and animals in his complaint to Cyrene, which is motivated by the death of his bees; the connexion with the themes of Virgil's four books is obvious. Then, too, he is enabled to retrieve his fortunes by strict adherence to divine commands, as though following Virgil's advice *in primis venerare deos* ('above all worship the gods', 1.338), and shows himself, at the same time, to be capable of receiving didactic instruction and following it to the letter.<sup>101</sup> He also has parallels with Octavian in the proem and *sphragis*, as one seeking immortality (325) by virtue both of his benefactions to humanity and of his divine parentage;<sup>102</sup> his attempts to regain his bees have often been seen as symbolic of Octavian's 'refoundation' of Rome.<sup>103</sup> Finally, his story can be related in several ways to the theme of the relationship between individual and community: unlike Orpheus, he is not wholly self-reliant, but turns in his troubles to his mother Cyrene, who draws him into the underwater community of the nymphs; similarly, the arts which he has discovered are not limited to his own use, but will also benefit posterity; and, most obviously, it is he who is credited with the renewal of the impersonal society of the beehive.

<sup>99</sup> On Homeric allusions in the Aristaeus epyllion, see especially Farrell (1991), pp. 104–13 and 253–72.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Conte (1986).

<sup>101</sup> Almost literally: note the partial repetition of lines 538–46 in 549–53. The phrase *sed . . . dicam* ('but I will tell you') in 537 is perhaps didactic in tone: cf. *DRN* 4.880, 5.273; 1.418, 951 etc.; *Geo.* 2.226; *Aen.* 3.388.

<sup>102</sup> Not only is Aristaeus the *heuretes* of the *bougonia*, but his agricultural labours are also described in terms which suggest discovery (cf. *extuderat*, 'hammered out', 328 with *extunderet*, 'hammer out', 1.133, and *omnia temptanti*, 'trying everything', 328 with *aliam atque aliam culturam . . . temptabant*, 'they tried out one method of cultivation after another', *DRN* 5.1367f.). For the deification of *heuretai*, see e.g. *Diod. Sic.* 1.13–29, *Cic. N.D.* 1.38 and 2.62; for Aristaeus as *heuretes*, see Hiller von Gaertringen (1896), cols. 856–7.

<sup>103</sup> See, most recently, Lee (1996), esp. pp. 130–9.

Orpheus, on the other hand, is not only a solitary figure, but is also exclusively devoted to a single, irreplaceable individual, his lost Eurydice. She is the sole theme of his song, for this Orpheus does not sing of cosmogony or theogony. Nor is he a public benefactor like the Orpheus of *Aeneid* 6 or of Horace's *Ars Poetica*.<sup>104</sup> His art is not used for any practical end, and he seems to care nothing for the effects of his song – his ability to tame tigers and animate trees is mentioned almost casually in line 510. And he is fatally subject to *furor*, which causes him to disobey divine commands by looking back at Eurydice and so losing her for ever. Poetry and *amor* are closely linked here: Orpheus' love for Eurydice inspires the song which almost succeeds in conquering death, but also motivates the fatal backward glance. The poet's strength is also his weakness.

Yet, as has often been remarked, Orpheus is given much more sympathetic treatment than the rather colourless Aristaeus. The 'subjective' style of Proteus' speech, with its emotive use of repetition, apostrophe and simile, invites us to sympathize with its hero despite his weaknesses. Moreover, despite his failure to resurrect Eurydice, Orpheus does, apparently, confer a kind of immortality upon his beloved. As his severed head floats down the Hebrus, it continues to call Eurydice's name, and the cry is taken up and broadcast by the banks of the river. This rather grotesque image suggests the notion of poetic immortality: though both the poet and his beloved are dead, her name will survive. Thus, three kinds of immortality are depicted in the epyllion: the impersonal survival of the community despite the deaths of individuals, as represented by Aristaeus' regenerated bees; the immortality of the *heures*, won through his own labours, like that of Octavian in the *sphragis*; and the immortality conferred by the poet. The poet offers us three different (and not wholly compatible) kinds of consolation for the tragedies of suffering and death depicted in book 3.<sup>105</sup> All three have their problems: Orpheus' individualistic devotion to Eurydice demonstrates the weakness of the impersonal ideal of the beehive, in which one individual – or even a whole swarm – is interchangeable with another; the power of

<sup>104</sup> *Aeneid* 6.645–7; *A.P.* 391–3.

<sup>105</sup> Contrast Parry (1972), who argues that the tension between individual and community is resolved through the 'idea of art': Orpheus' grief is redeemed by becoming the subject of song, while Aristaeus must 'learn a lesson of poetry' before he is allowed to recover his bees. While appealing, this interpretation seems to me to read too much into the text: so far as I can see, there is no indication either of redemption for Orpheus or that Aristaeus learns anything from Proteus' speech.

poetry is associated with passion and death, as well as immortality; and Aristaeus' discovery is achieved only at the cost of violence and destruction, which are displayed not only in his slaughter of sacrificial cattle (discussed in chapter 3), but in his aggressive confrontation with Proteus, who must be caught, bound and forcibly compelled to part with his secrets.

Proteus has affinities at one level with the natural world as a whole, the environment which the farmer struggles to reduce to obedience and order.<sup>106</sup> His miraculous transformations suggest the ceaseless change inherent in the nature of things; and Aristaeus' violent extortion of his prophetic powers parallels the violence which the farmer must necessarily exert upon his environment in order to render it productive.<sup>107</sup> The aggression which Aristaeus shows towards Proteus can be connected with his aggressive pursuit of Eurydice: a link is suggested particularly by the nightingale simile in 511-15, in which Orpheus' grief is compared to the lamentation of a bird whose young have been destroyed by a *durus arator* ('cruel ploughman'). This simile recalls in turn a passage in book 2:

aut unde *iratus* silvam devexit *arator*  
et nemora evertit multos ignava per annos,  
antiquasque domos avium cum stirpibus imis  
eruit; illae altum nidis petiere relictis,  
at rudis enituit impulso vomere campus.                      2.207-11

Or land from which the furious ploughman has cleared woods and cut down groves which have lain idle for many a year, pulling down the birds' ancient homes, roots and all; they take to the skies, their nests abandoned, but the rough plain grows bright under the thrust of the plough.

While Aristaeus' responsibility for Eurydice's death is not precisely parallel to the actions of the farmer here, the similarity between the two passages makes it difficult to resist the idea that the two ploughmen are related. Orpheus and Proteus are both victims, like the birds who lose

<sup>106</sup> For Proteus as an allegory of nature cf. Heraclitus, *Quaest. Hom.* 64-7 (Proteus represents the unformed matter which existed before the creation of the cosmos; his daughter Eidothea represents divine Providence, which creates order out of chaos by separating primary matter into the four elements (Proteus' transformations)). Similar interpretations can be found in Eustathius and the *Odyssey* scholia; see Buffière (1956), pp. 179-86.

<sup>107</sup> On this theme, see further pp. 101-2 and 252-9 below; cf. also Segal (1966), Wender (1969).

their homes in book 2, of the violence which the farmer needs to employ in his struggle against the natural world.<sup>108</sup>

Proteus also resembles Orpheus as a poet-figure, a *vates*; like Orpheus, he is possessed of great power, which is nevertheless not necessarily useful for practical purposes. He does indeed reveal the cause of the disease which has destroyed Aristaeus' bees, as Cyrene promised (397), but gives no indication of what Aristaeus is to do about it. The practical advice is left to Cyrene herself, who delivers her instructions in a plain and businesslike style, differing markedly from the emotive language employed by Proteus. Yet both Proteus' speech and Cyrene's speech have their own validity, their own kind of truth, as Cyrene seems to acknowledge in her opening words: *haec omnis morbi causa, hinc miserabile nymphae . . . exitium misere apibus* ('this is the whole cause of the disease, this is why the nymphs have caused your bees to perish so wretchedly', 532–4). Neither is complete in itself, and both are ultimately necessary for Aristaeus' final achievement of his goal.<sup>109</sup>

Thus, the contrast between the characters of Proteus and Cyrene, like the contrast between Orpheus and Aristaeus, has a metapoetic dimension. Once again, we can read this part of the narrative as a meditation on 'the poet's conflicts between poetry as a civilizing, socially responsible task . . . and poetry as the expression of private emotion'.<sup>110</sup> Yet it is far from clear which of these poles is occupied by the *Georgics* itself.<sup>111</sup> In some ways, the poet of the *Georgics* has affinities with Orpheus and Proteus: in book 3, Virgil refers to his own poetic inspiration as a *dulcis amor* ('sweet love', 291–2)<sup>112</sup> which overcomes him as surely as erotic love masters Orpheus; and in the *sphragis* he depicts himself as a detached, pastoral figure (like his character Tityrus), not dissimilar to the 'shepherd'

<sup>108</sup> But Orpheus also bears a part of the responsibility for his own loss, since his *furor* was the cause of Eurydice's second death: compare the more detailed discussion of the nightingale simile on pp. 135–8 below.

<sup>109</sup> For this reading of the relationship between the two speeches, see especially Freudenburg (1987) and Perkell (1989), pp. 143f.

<sup>110</sup> Segal (1989), p. 24.

<sup>111</sup> Contrast Henry (1992), pp. 186–93 and Clare (1995), both of whom tend to view the epyllion as 'a reaffirmation of the worth of active learning' (Clare (1995), p. 106). Schiesaro (1997) similarly argues that the *praeceptor* in the *Georgics* has close affinities with Cyrene, in his advocacy of a strictly limited, practical knowledge (as opposed to the philosophical understanding of the cosmos preached by Lucretius or the sympathetic understanding of Proteus).

<sup>112</sup> The phrase is particularly striking in context, coming as it does immediately after the account of erotic *amor* and its destructive effect on the animal kingdom in 209–83.

Proteus.<sup>113</sup> On the other hand, the didactic stance which the poet has occupied through the preceding three and a half books has more obvious affinities with that of Cyrene, just as Aristaeus has affinities with the didactic addressee. What kind of poem is the *Georgics*? The epyllion leaves the question very much open.<sup>114</sup>

The epyllion as a whole transposes the themes of death, rebirth and immortality, individualism and social responsibility, poetry and public life, violence and creativity onto the level of myth, and offers a kind of synthesis of the concerns which have dominated the poem as a whole without necessarily resolving the tensions and conflicts which we have been tracing through the previous finales. The closing images of the rebirth of Aristaeus' bees from the rotting carcasses of the animals he has sacrificed also embody some of these themes, in particular the cycle of birth and death with which we began. Taken in isolation, the conclusion seems to reassert the Lucretian notion that birth and death are interdependent, that decay and destruction must be accepted as the inevitable complement of creation and growth. But our reading of the *bougonia* must inevitably be conditioned by what has come before it. The notion of the natural cycle – and of the survival of the race as consolation for the death of the individual – offers an answer to the questions posed by the poet in response to the death of the plough-ox in book 3.<sup>115</sup> But many readers will find that consolation inadequate in the face of Orpheus' overwhelming grief for the loss of his beloved Eurydice.

<sup>113</sup> On Proteus as a pastoral figure, see especially Segal (1989), pp. 76f.

<sup>114</sup> Freudenburg's observations on Lucretian echoes here are very much to the point: he notes that the phrase *morbi causa* ('the cause of the disease'; used twice by Cyrene with reference to Proteus' prophecy, 397 and 532) has an important antecedent in *DRN* 3.1070, where human discontent and unrest are attributed to ignorance (*hoc se quisque modo fugit, at quem scilicet, ut fit, effugere haud potis est, ingratis haeret et odit | propterea, morbi quia causam non tenet aeger*, 'so each man flees himself, and yet, against his will, clings to and loathes the self that, naturally, he cannot escape; because he is sick, and does not grasp the cause of his disease'). These lines express an essential tenet of Lucretius' philosophical system: knowledge and understanding are all that are needed for happiness, *ratio* leads directly to salvation. It is one of the central theses of the present work that Virgil constantly tends to question and undermine this supposition, without finally committing himself to either a Lucretian or an anti-Lucretian world-view. Thus, Proteus' account of the *causa morbi* seems in the finale to be inadequate of itself, but also essential for success, and Virgil does not fully identify himself with either the 'philosophical' Proteus or the practical Cyrene.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. especially 4.321–32: despite his rather petulant tone, Aristaeus raises essentially the same questions as those voiced by the didactic narrator himself in 3.525f. Cf. Freudenburg (1987).



Like the proems and finales of the *DRN*, the proems and finales of the *Georgics* can be read as a series, and fall into a distinctive pattern. Lucretius' 'light' proems and 'dark' finales reflect the natural cycle of birth and death, and display to the audience both our need of Epicureanism and the rewards that await the willing disciple. In Virgil's case, an optimistic view of the relationship between the poet and the statesman, the farmer and the gods tends to give way in each book to a more troubling, uncertain and complex picture. The proems to books 1 and 3 cast Octavian in the role of triumphing hero and inspiring deity, analogous both to Lucretius' Venus and to his Epicurus; the shorter proems to books 2 and 4 represent the gods as kindly benefactors who willingly bestow the gifts of fruitfulness and plenty. At the outset, too, the poet seems to reject both the Lucretian opposition between *ataraxia* and political life, which are seen as interdependent, and the Epicurean belief in detached and indifferent deities. These apparent certainties are progressively undermined through the first three finales, which in turn cast doubt on Octavian's ability to prevent the resurgence of civil strife; set up a quasi-Epicurean withdrawal from public life as an ideal; and problematize the notion of rustic peace by showing that even the world of the pious and virtuous farmer is subject to the violent forces of nature. The Aristaeus epyllion recapitulates these themes in a different mode, and – like Lucretius' Athenian plague – concludes the work by embodying its central concerns in the form of myth. Virgil's finale offers a kind of answer (though one which is by no means straightforward) to the images of death and suffering which conclude both Lucretius' poem and his own third book; where Lucretius ends with death, Virgil's conclusion balances the tragedy of human mortality against the renewal of society and the immortality conferred by the poet.

## *The gods, the farmer and the natural world*

In the last chapter, I touched on two related themes which call for further discussion. I noted, firstly, that Virgil tends to open each book with a relatively optimistic and unproblematic view of the relationship between human beings and the gods, which is gradually complicated as the poem proceeds and a range of different perspectives is offered to the reader. Secondly, I looked briefly at the farmer's relationship with his environment, which I characterized as a struggle between order and chaos, human control and natural degeneration. In this chapter, I will suggest that the ambiguities and tensions inherent in Virgil's handling of the relationships between gods, human beings and their natural environment are closely related to his handling of his didactic models. The three main didactic intertexts – Hesiod, Aratus and Lucretius – have different and mutually incompatible world-views. For Lucretius, the imperfection of the world proves that the gods have no concern with human life; yet, though death and decay are inevitable, happiness is easy to attain, simply by accepting the world as it really is. Hesiod's picture is grimmer: though worshipping the gods will bring its rewards, endless toil is inescapable, and success can be attained only through hard work. For Aratus, on the other hand, Zeus is a kindly father, akin to the Stoic *pronoia* (providence),<sup>1</sup> and the universe is systematic and orderly. Virgil's text allows each of these models to predominate in turn (particularly in book 1, where Hesiod and Aratus are most prominent), orchestrating their different voices in such a way as to emphasize the differences between them, rather than to produce a homogenous, unified whole.

<sup>1</sup> For Aratus and Stoicism, see Effe (1977), pp. 40–56, with further bibliography; cf. also Hunter (1995) and Kidd (1997), pp. 10–12.

*Gods and mortals*

*Georgics* 1 is concerned, above all, with the need for hard work and constant vigilance against the threats of pests, weeds, exhaustion of the soil, bad weather and the declining fertility of the natural world as a whole. The book is in part a meditation on the relationship between the concept of divine providence and the numerous hardships which confront the farmer and the human race in general; the problem is raised explicitly in the first major digression of the poem, the 'aetiology of *labor*' (118–59). This controversial passage is the focal point where the Hesiodic, Aratean and Lucretian perspectives come together; but already from the opening lines of the book, the poet has combined phrasing suggestive of Lucretian rationalism with references to divine intervention, hinting at the difficulties which will emerge when the problem of *labor* is confronted directly.

In the first part of *Georgics* 1, the most obvious model is Hesiod. Lines 43–203 (where there is a strong break) correspond roughly to Hesiod's 'works', 204–350 to his 'days',<sup>2</sup> after which we move on to the mainly Aratean material of the weather signs. On the other hand, although the framework is Hesiodic, the vocabulary and detail are highly reminiscent of Lucretius, especially in the opening section of the book. Virgil, like Lucretius (and unlike Hesiod or the Roman agricultural writers), begins in spring, 'when the ice melts away from the white mountain-peaks and the crumbling clod is loosened by Zephyrus' (43f.). Similar imagery of loosening and opening occurs in Lucretius' proem, but Virgil's instructions for ploughing also recall the more negative pictures of the earth's productive capacity which Lucretius paints when arguing that the world is too imperfect to be the work of the gods.<sup>3</sup> Lucretius shows us different aspects of the natural world at different times, as it suits his argument:

<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see Farrell (1991), pp. 134–42.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *DRN* 1.10f.: *nam simul ac species patefactast verna diei | et reserata viget genitabilis aura favori* ('for as soon as spring days show their face, and the fertile zephyr's breath blows free and strong'); 5.206–11: *quod superest arvi, tamen id natura sua vi | sentibus obducat, ni vis humana resistat | vitai causa valido consueta bidenti | ingemere et terram pressis proscindere aratris*. [note the identical metrical shape of *Geo.* 1.46] | *si non fecundas vertentes vomere glebas | terraique solum subigentes cinis ad ortus*. . . ('As for the lands that remain, even these would be covered with brambles by the force of nature if human strength did not resist her, well used as we are to groaning over the sturdy mattock for our livelihood and furrowing the earth by pressure of the plough. If we did not encourage crops to grow by turning over the rich clods with the ploughshare and subduing the soil of the earth . . .'); 1.313f.: *uncus aratri | ferreus occulte decrescit vomer in arvis* ('the hooked iron ploughshare is imperceptibly worn down in the fields'). The phrase *putris glæba* ('crumbling clod') is also Lucretian (see *DRN* 5.142).

from one point of view the earth is fertile and productive, the source of all life; from another, it is worn out, like a woman past the age of child-bearing, since it can no longer produce crops and living beings spontaneously, as the first plants and animals were produced.<sup>4</sup> Already in the first four lines after his proem, Virgil juxtaposes these two perspectives: Zephyrus helps the farmer by loosening the clods, but the bull must still 'groan' as it toils with the heavy plough.

Virgil then interrupts his instructions on ploughing, and advises the farmer to ascertain first what kind of crop his land is suitable for, since different areas and different regions of the world differ in their capacities. Once again, the language is highly Lucretian, recalling the theme of natural limits which runs through the *DRN*.<sup>5</sup> But the scientific pose adopted here by the didactic *praeceptor* is combined, surprisingly, with a mythological action: the regional diversity of the earth is traced back to Deucalion's repopulation of the world after the flood (61f.), though still attributed to nature rather than to the gods. This unexpected combination of Hesiodic myth<sup>6</sup> with Lucretian rationalism already anticipates the more complex play of intertextual relations in the aetiology of *labor*.

Virgil deals next with crop-rotation (including a pseudo-scientific/Lucretian account of the effects of stubble-burning<sup>7</sup>) and follows it up with another Hesiodic and very anti-Lucretian image, blonde Ceres looking down with favour from Olympus on the farmer who is assiduous in hoeing and cross-ploughing.<sup>8</sup> This Hesiodic note continues into the

<sup>4</sup> Fertile earth: see especially 1.250–64, 2.991–8; worn-out earth: see 2.1150–74, 5.826–36.

<sup>5</sup> For detailed parallels, and further discussion of the theme of natural limits, see pp. 201–6 below.

<sup>6</sup> See Hes. fr. 234 Merkelbach–West.

<sup>7</sup> Lines 86–93 in general recall the Lucretian/Epicurean principle of citing a plurality of explanations where certainty is impossible (cf. Epic. *Ep. ad Pyth.* 86–8, *DRN* 6.703–11). It is notable, however, that Lucretius generally appeals to this principle only when discussing phenomena which are distant in time or space. Virgil's world is much more mysterious and uncertain. More specifically, note that Lucretius generally introduces these multiple explanations with the formulae *sive . . . sive* ('either . . . or', e.g. 5.509–33, 575f. and esp. 1244–9, where the context is similar) or *aut quia . . . aut quia* ('either because . . . or because', e.g. 5.656–65, 680–704). The explanations themselves are full of Lucretian language: note especially *caeca* ('invisible', 89; very common in this sense in Lucretius, e.g. 1.277, 3.247, 3.316, 5.611, 6.1016), *excoquere/percoquere* ('to bake', 88; *DRN* 6.858 and 962), *spiramenta* ('pores', 90) ~ *spiracula mundi* ('the pores of the world', *DRN* 6.493), *penetra(bi)le frigus* ('piercing cold', 93 ~ *DRN* 1.494). More generally, the second explanation recalls Lucretius' accounts of the discovery of metals (*DRN* 5.1252–7) and the 'sweating out' of the sea from the earth (5.487f., and cf. *sudor . . . maris*, 'the sweat of the sea', 2.465 and *saxa . . . sudent umore*, 'rocks sweat with moisture', 6.943), the third recalls his explanation for hot and cold wells (6.830–78) and the fourth recalls numerous references to the drying power of the sun (e.g. 5.215, 252, 389; 6.616–22, 962). <sup>8</sup> Cf. *Op.* 299–301.

next paragraph, which deals with irrigation and drainage, and is based loosely on *Op.* 465–78: the combination of work (104–17) and prayer (100) is characteristic.<sup>9</sup> But whereas the Hesiodic paragraph ends with a promise of success (473–8),<sup>10</sup> Virgil subtly alters his model to emphasize the unending toil which confronts even the most diligent of farmers. The nodding sheaves which for Hesiod are a sign of lush ripeness become in the *Georgics* yet another danger which must be guarded against (111–17).<sup>11</sup> Still further threats are presented by pests, weeds and shade (118–21). It is this dismal list which prompts the famous account of the end of the Golden Age and Jupiter's imposition of *labor* on mankind.

This is perhaps the most controversial section of the whole poem.<sup>12</sup> Critics have argued endlessly over the tone of the passage: is Virgil lamenting or celebrating the end of the Golden Age and the introduction of *labor*? Does the catalogue of discoveries in 136–45 constitute a celebration of human ingenuity and progress, or is it more ambivalent? And what is the precise significance of the phrase *labor improbus* (145f.)?

Some light can be shed on these difficult questions by examining the network of intertextual relationships which underlies the Virgilian aetiology. The Golden Age is a very common theme in both Greek and Latin literature, but the main models are again Hesiod and Lucretius. Hesiod offers two explanations for the necessity to work: the 'degeneration' of humanity expressed in the Myth of Ages, and Zeus' punishment for Prometheus' theft of fire. Virgil combines the two: his account of the pre-Jovian age recalls Hesiod's Golden Age,<sup>13</sup> but the way the account is introduced (we might paraphrase, 'it is necessary to work hard because Jupiter brought the life of leisure to an end') corresponds to the beginning

<sup>9</sup> Cf. esp. 100f. with *Op.* 465f. (εὐχέσθαι δὲ Διὶ χθονίῳ Δημήτερι θ' ἄγῃ . . . , 'pray to chthonian Zeus and holy Demeter'); 104f. with *Op.* 469f. (*communis . . . insequitur*, 'follows close' ~ τυτθὸς ὀπισθε, 'close behind'; *cumulosque ruit*, 'flattens the mounds' ~ σπέρμα κατακρύπτων, 'hiding the seed'); and 111 with *Op.* 473 (ἄδροσύνῃ στάχυες νεύσιεν ἔραζε, 'the corn-ears will bow down to the ground with fullness').

<sup>10</sup> The promise of a plentiful harvest is balanced in 479–82 by the threat of failure for those who leave ploughing till the spring; but the contrast only serves to reinforce the message that diligence will be duly rewarded.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Thomas *ad loc.*

<sup>12</sup> The bibliography on 1.118–59 is too extensive to list in full. In addition to the commentators, see especially Altevogt (1952), Taylor (1955), Wilkinson (1963), Stehle (1974), Putnam (1979), pp. 32–6, Ross (1987), pp. 79–92, Jenkyns (1993), Schäfer (1996), pp. 19–44.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. especially *gravi veterno* ('heavy sloth [lit. age]', 124) and δειλὸν γῆρας ('terrible old age', *Op.* 113f.) – though the inversion in sense is important; *ipsaque tellus | omnia liberius nullo poscente ferebat* ('the earth itself brought forth all things freely and unprompted', 127f.) and καρπὸν δ' ἔφερε ζείδωρος ἄρουρα ('the bountiful earth brought forth fruit', *Op.* 117).

of the Prometheus story.<sup>14</sup> This is reinforced by the phrase *abstrusum* . . . *ignem* ('hidden fire') in 135, which recalls the hiding of fire by Hesiod's Zeus.<sup>15</sup> But there are two crucial differences from the Hesiodic account. For Hesiod, ἀργίη ('leisure', 'idleness') is ultimately a desirable state, as we see from the introduction to the Prometheus myth and the description of the Golden Age. But in the Iron Age, work is vital and ἀργίη is reprehensible, as Hesiod says explicitly in *Op.* 311: ἔργον δ' οὐδὲν ὄνειδος, ἀργίη δέ τ' ὄνειδος ('work is no shame, but idleness is shameful'). Virgil collapses this distinction by having Jupiter end the Golden Age in order to bring an end to sloth, *gravis veternus*, rather than to punish mankind. We are left, then, in some doubt whether work is a good thing or not. On the one hand, the picture of the pre-Jovian age is based on Hesiod's nostalgic primitivism. On the other, Jupiter is now apparently acting rather like the Stoic Zeus, to benefit mankind – it seems particularly significant that he is referred to as *pater* ('father') in 121.<sup>16</sup>

Something similar seems to be going on in 145f. Initially, the epigram *labor omnia vicit* ('work/toil overcame everything') sounds positive and hopeful – until we come up against the adjective *improbis* at the beginning of the next line. The enjambment makes the word both startling and emphatic, qualifying the sense of the previous line. But what precisely does *improbis* mean? Elsewhere in Virgil, the adjective is unambiguously pejorative, connoting insatiability and ruthless cruelty: it is often used of predatory animals, with a shade of pity for the victim.<sup>17</sup> An obvious

<sup>14</sup> *Op.* 42–6. Note especially ἀργὸν ἔόντα ('without working', 44; cf. *gravi veterno*, 'heavy sloth', *Geo.* 1.124) and ἔργα βοῶν ('work of oxen', 46; cf. *boumque labores*, 'work of oxen', *Geo.* 1.118).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. esp. κρύψε δὲ πῦρ, 'he [Zeus] hid fire', *Op.* 50.

<sup>16</sup> For Stoic views on providence and progress, see e.g. Chrysippus, *SVF* 2.1172, 1181, 1183; Posidonius *ap. Sen. Ep.* 90.7–26; Panaetius *ap. Cic. Off.* 1.11–13 and 2.15–17. The theory that hardship and suffering are necessary prerequisites for the exercise of virtue is advanced by Seneca (*Dial.* 1.2.6, 4.7, 9.7.5; *H.F.* 433) and Epictetus (1.6.32–6, 1.24.1f.), amongst others: note especially *Sen. Dial.* 1.2.5f., where Jupiter is compared to a stern but ultimately benevolent father. Cf. also *Cic. N.D.* 2.161, where the Stoic speaker, Balbus, argues that even ferocious animals exist for the sake of human beings, since hunting provides both food and exercise 'similar to military training'. See further Hine (1995), and Long and Sedley (1987), pp. 323–33.

<sup>17</sup> E.g. goose (*Geo.* 1.119), snake (3.431), wolf (*Aen.* 9.62), lion (10.727), eagle (12.250). The adjective is also applied to the cruelty of *Amor* (*Ed.* 8.49, *Aen.* 4.412), and to Aeneas' ruthlessness from the perspective of the hostile Dido, Turnus and Tolumnius (*Aen.* 4.386, 11.512 and 12.261). Contrast the readings of Wilkinson (1969), pp. 134–43 and Jenkyns (1993), who suggest that *improbis* may here be fairly mild in tone, representing the farmer's immediate reaction to the exertions he must constantly undergo (Jenkyns suggests 'bloody hard work' as a translation); Lau (1975), pp. 246–53, similarly argues that the adjective need

Greek equivalent would be *σχετλίη* ('cruel', 'hateful'), which is used by Hesiod in the opening lines of the *Works and Days* to distinguish the good Eris, who inspires competition and thus work, from the bad Eris, who inspires hateful and unproductive strife.<sup>18</sup> But Virgil has once again collapsed the Hesiodic opposition. In the world of the *Georgics*, agricultural work is *labor improbus*, carried on under the aegis of Ἔρις *σχετλίη*.<sup>19</sup> There is no neat distinction between good and bad strife; there is simply *labor*, with all the ambivalence the word entails.

The passage is further complicated by a series of allusions to Lucretius. The main model is Lucretius' culture-history at the end of book 5, which itself alludes extensively to Hesiod. In describing the first phase of human prehistory, Lucretius alternately demythologizes and debunks the Hesiodic picture of the Golden Age: early man lived off the spontaneous fruits of the earth (acorns and arbutus), but enjoyed neither peace nor long life; there was no agriculture and no war, but people often starved to death or poisoned themselves through ignorance.<sup>20</sup> This stage was followed by the gradual development of civilization, a highly ambiguous process in Lucretius' eyes. Beneficial inventions such as agriculture and language were inevitably accompanied by harmful inventions such as weapons and religion. Virgil similarly emphasizes the gradual nature of these developments (in highly Lucretian language<sup>21</sup>) and perhaps suggests

not be interpreted in a moral sense, and may not mean much more than 'unlimited'. Neither view is really borne out by the parallels cited above, particularly the application of the adjective to *Amor* and to Aeneas by his enemies, both of which suggest a strong sense of outrage and indignation. The notion that *labor* may seem good from one point of view and bad from another, however, is well taken. Cf. also G. Bianco, *E. V. s.v. labor*.

<sup>18</sup> *Op.* 11–26. Note especially the enjambment of *σχετλίη* in 15. C. Formicola (*E. V. s.v. improbus*) points out that Virgil similarly translates Apollonius' *σκέτλι' Ἔρως* (*Arg.* 4.445) by *improbe Amor* in *Aen.* 4.412 (and cf. *Ecl.* 8.49f.).

<sup>19</sup> For agricultural labour as 'strife' or warfare, see chapter 7 below.

<sup>20</sup> For a more detailed discussion, see Furley (1978), Bertoli (1980), Farrell (1994) and Gale (1994a), pp. 169–77 (with further bibliography at n. 61).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. esp. *ut varias usus meditando extunderet artis* | paulatim *et sulcis frumenti quaereret herbam* ('so that, through experience and thought, man would gradually hammer out the various arts and seek from plough-land the blade of corn', 133f.) with *usus et impigrae simul experientia mentis* | paulatim *docuit pedetemptim progredientis*. | *sic unumquicquid paulatim protrahit aetas* . . . *artibus ad summum donec venere cacumen* ('Practice and the learning gained from experience by the quick mind taught them gradually as they advanced step by step. So time gradually brought each invention forth . . . until they advanced to the topmost pinnacle of the arts', *DRN* 5.1452–7). *paulatim* ('gradually') is a favourite word of Lucretius', occurring 23 times in the *DRN* (only 9 times in the whole Virgilian corpus). Agriculture (5.1361–78), fire (1091–1104), sailing and astronomy (1436–42), hunting (1250f.) and tools (1266–8) are all discussed by Lucretius. The parenthesis in 144 is also strongly reminiscent of Lucretius' style (cf. esp. 1250ff.; also 1283ff., 1297–9, 1350–3).

a degree of ambivalence about some of the discoveries: *fallere* ('to trick') in 139 has moralizing overtones, and *ferri rigor* ('the rigidity of iron', 143) may hint at the rigours of the Iron Age.<sup>22</sup> But the real counterpoise to the hopeful tone of the catalogue is the Lucretian idea that some 'progress' is necessary just to maintain the *status quo*, because the earth itself is in decline. This idea is prominent at the end of *DRN* 2 and in the anti-teleological argument of book 5: in both places, Lucretius emphasizes the need for endless agricultural toil, and both passages are echoed by Virgil at the beginning and end of the 'aetiology of *labor*':

quae [sc. crops] nunc vix nostro grandescunt aucta labore,  
conterimusque boves et viris agricolarum,  
conficimus ferrum vix arvis suppeditati:  
usque adeo parcut fetus augentque laborem. *DRN* 2.1160–3

Crops are now grown with difficulty, in spite of our labours; we wear out our oxen and the strength of our farmers, we blunt our tools and scarcely harvest enough for our needs: the earth is so chary with her produce and demands so much more work.

quod superest arvi, tamen id natura sua vi  
sentibus obducit, ni vis humana resistat  
vitai causa valido consueta bidenti  
ingemere et terram pressis proscindere aratris.  
si non fecundas *vertentes* vomere *glebas*  
terraique solum subigentes<sup>23</sup> cimus ad ortus,  
sponte sua nequeant liquidas exsistere in auras.  
*et tamen* interdum magno quaesita labore  
cum iam per terras frondent atque omnia florent,  
aut nimiis torret fervoribus aetherius sol  
aut subiti perimunt imbres gelidaeque pruinae,  
flabraque ventorum violento turbine vexant.

*DRN* 5.206–17<sup>24</sup>

As for the lands that remain, even these would be covered with brambles by the force of nature if human strength did not resist her, well used as we are to groaning over the sturdy mattock for our livelihood and furrowing the earth by pressure of the plough. If we did not encourage them to grow by turning over the rich clods with

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Thomas *ad loc.* Lyne (1993), pp. 204f., points out that *fallere* ('trick') in 139 seems to contradict *nescia fallere vita* ('a life ignorant of trickery') in 2.467.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *subigebant*, 'subdued', *Geo.* 1.125. <sup>24</sup> Cf. also 1.208–14.



the ploughshare and subduing the soil of the earth, plants could not spring up of their own accord into the clear air. And even so, when the crops which we have tended with so much labour are all in leaf and blooming throughout the land, the fiery sun sometimes scorches them with too much heat, or sudden rain and icy frost destroy them, and gusts of wind buffet them with violent blasts.

*nec tamen, haec cum sint hominumque boumque labores  
versando terram experti, nihil improbus anser  
Strymoniaeque grues et amaris intiba fibris  
officiunt aut umbra nocet.*

*Geo.* 1.118–21

And even so, when men and oxen have been through all this labour of turning over the soil, the insatiable goose and Strymonian crane do no little damage, and the chicory with its bitter fibres, or shade injures the crops.

*mox et frumentis labor additus, ut mala culmos  
esset robigo segnisque horreret in arvis  
carduus; intereunt segetes, subit aspera silva,  
lappaeque tribolique, interque nitentia culta<sup>25</sup>  
infelix lolium et steriles dominantur avenae.*

*Geo.* 1.150–4<sup>26</sup>

Soon agriculture too became laborious, for evil mildew attacked the stalks and fields bristled with worthless thistles; the crops perish, up springs a rough undergrowth of burrs and caltrops; barren darnel and sterile wild oats hold sway amongst the shining plough-lands.

The Lucretian theory of natural decline thus frames the Hesiodic Golden Age and the Stoicizing reference to Jupiter's providential care, so that the reader is confronted with three possible views of the relationship between past and present. But it is of course important that Virgil attributes the whole sequence of development to the gods. Jupiter ends the Golden

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *nitidas fruges*, 'shining crops', *DRN* 2.1157.

<sup>26</sup> The contrast between past (the Golden Age, 125–8) and present also recalls the end of *DRN* 2 (cf. esp. 128 with *DRN* 2.1158). Cf. also *ipsaque tellus | omnia . . . ferebat* ('the earth itself brought forth all things', 127f.) with *DRN* 5.233f.: *quando omnibus omnia large | tellus ipsa parit* ('since the earth itself brought forth everything abundantly for all') – but it is only animals, not human beings, who get food for nothing in Lucretius. It seems significant, too, that Lucretius attributes our willingness to undergo *labor* ('toil') to the fear of *egestas* ('want') in *DRN* 3.59–67, a passage Virgil was later to recall in the *Aeneid* (6.277). The epithet *improba* is given in 5.1006 to seafaring, one of the discoveries which Lucretius regards as wholly pernicious; but the line should perhaps be regarded as an interpolation (see Bailey (1947) *ad loc.*).

Age and inspires human beings to gradual development of the arts.<sup>27</sup> These developments also coexist with divine benefaction, another very un-Lucretian touch. The whole of Lucretius' culture-history is an implicit denial of the role of divine *heuretai* in the growth of civilization. *Natura creatrix* ('nature the creator')<sup>28</sup> replaces Ceres as the motivating force behind the development of agriculture. Virgil, however, emphatically reinstates her: *prima Ceres ferro mortalis vertere terram | instituit* ('Ceres first introduced to mortal men the art of turning the earth with iron'). The reversal is pointed with further Lucretian echoes.<sup>29</sup>

To recapitulate: the 'aetiology of *labor*' echoes the incompatible versions of Hesiod and Lucretius, adopting some elements from both accounts, and pointedly reversing others. The wonderful age of ease and leisure was ended by Jupiter – but in order to benefit, not to punish mankind. Work is a good thing (in view of *gravi veterno*, 'heavy sloth') and a bad thing (in view of *improbis*, 'insatiable'): the two Hesiodic *Erides* are one. The world is in decline – but that does not prove Lucretius' contention that the gods are not in control. The arts were gradually developed by human beings – but Jupiter and Ceres were behind the process. The gods both give and take away. Work is a necessary evil and a sign of the providential organization of the world. What is the reader to make of this tangle? Perhaps, rather than attempting to resolve the apparent contradictions, we should read the whole passage as suggesting that the Hesiodic, Lucretian and Stoic interpretations of history and

<sup>27</sup> The terms of Jupiter's 'benefaction' in 122–3 recall Lucretius' Epicurus: compare *primusque per artem | movit agros* ('[Jupiter] first artfully stirred up the fields') with *quique per artem | fluctibus e tantis . . .* ('and by his art, from such great waves . . .', DRN 5.10f.). Philip Hardie points out to me (*per litteras*) that the slightly odd usage of the verb *movit* in *Geo.* 1.123 reinforces the echo: it would more naturally refer (as in 130) to the raising of a storm at sea; cf. *aequor* in 1.50, with Thomas, *ad loc.* Note also that Epicurus is *princeps*, 'first', in 5.9, *primus*, 'first', in 1.67, 1.71 and 3.2 and *pater*, 'father', in 3.9. See further Farrell (1991), p. 181. Virgil has once again reversed Lucretius, who replaces the traditional divine *heuretai* with the saviour Epicurus (cf. Gale (1994a), pp. 196–9). But it is significant that Jupiter stirs up storms (130) where Epicurus rescues from (metaphorical) storms, and generally makes life harder where Epicurus makes it easy and pleasant.

<sup>28</sup> DRN 5.1361–78. Cf. Gale (1994a), pp. 178f.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. esp. DRN 5.14f.: *Ceres fertur fruges . . . mortalibus instituere* ('Ceres is said to have introduced crops to mortal men'; the distancing formula is important). Also 5.934, 1295 and references to *glandes* ('acorns') and *arbuta* ('arbutus') in 939–42 and 965 (acorns are of course traditional primitive fare – see e.g. Dicaearchus *ap.* Porph. *Abst.* 4.2, Paus. 8.1.6, Juv. 13.57, Macrob. *In Somn. Scip.* 2.10.6 – but the pairing with arbutus is less common and seems to point specifically to Lucretius). *Dodona negaret* ('Dodona refused') also seems a pointed reversal of Lucretius' claim that acorns simply went out of fashion (5.1416).

civilization are all possible ways of viewing the world, none of which finally excludes the others, although they cannot be fully harmonized.<sup>30</sup>

The ambiguous role played by the gods in the 'aetiology of *labor*' sets the pattern for the rest of book 1, and for the poem as a whole. The first book is punctuated by references to Jupiter and Ceres, particularly in their capacities as weather god and patroness of agriculture respectively. *alma Ceres* ('kindly Ceres') is invoked as the 'inventor' of agriculture in the poem, where there is also a reference to her protégé, Triptolemus; and she maintains this beneficent role throughout the book. In 147 she appears again as *heuretes*, while in 95f. and 338–50 she looks with favour on the farmer who works hard and offers the appropriate prayers and sacrifices. The Hesiodic combination of work and prayer is similarly prominent in other passages. In 160–8, for instance, the farmer's tools are at once 'weapons' (*arma*, 160) and religious paraphernalia: references to 'the Eleusinian mother', Celeus and Iacchus evoke the Eleusinian mysteries and suggest a close connexion between agricultural labour and initiation rite. In 268–75, the poet lists tasks that can be carried out even on festival days: once again, work and *pietas* are seen as complementary.<sup>31</sup>

But while these passages recall Hesiod's confident assurances that hard work and piety will be duly rewarded, the part played by Jupiter in book 1 is much less reassuring. Two contrasting aspects are strikingly juxtaposed in the second half of the book: twice within the space of thirty

<sup>30</sup> Contrast Schäfer (1996), pp. 19–44. Schäfer argues that Virgil does in fact present a coherent picture of Jupiter's relationship with his mortal subjects: while the poet is not concerned to justify Jupiter's actions (the label 'theodicy' is misleading), he does represent them as ultimately providential. *veternus* in 124 is taken to refer to the 'ageing' of the world, rather than to human 'sloth': the 'evils' of 129–32 act as spurs to human creativity, necessary in the face of this natural decline. It seems much more natural, however, to take *veternus* as a (potential) quality of the Golden Race rather than their environment, and it is hard to see how the decline posited by Schäfer can be separated from Jupiter's own actions in bringing the Golden Age to an end. If Jupiter both causes the degeneration of the natural environment and enables his human subjects to cope with it, we are again left with a more ambiguous picture than Schäfer allows.

<sup>31</sup> Contrast the more idealized picture in the finale to book 2, discussed on p. 40 above. The phrasing of lines 268–70 recalls (and reverses) *DRN* 5.1167: [*horror*] *festis cogit celebrare diebus* ('the fear that compels us to crowd [the temples] on festival days'). For Lucretius, religion/superstition is a constricting force which constrains the worshipper to take part in disturbing rites: the idea of compulsion suggests the common derivation of *religio* from *religare*, 'to bind' (see Maltby (1991) s.v. *religiosus*), also alluded to in 1.932 = 4.7 and 5.114. For Virgil, on the other hand, *religio* does not prevent the farmer from carrying out useful tasks (*sinunt*, '[religious law] allows', 269 and *nulla | religio vetuit*, 'there is no religious prohibition', 269f. reverse Lucretius' *cogit*, 'compels').

lines (328 and 353), Jupiter is referred to by the phrase *ipse pater* ('the Father himself'), and the repetition underlines the contrast between the two passages. In the second, Jupiter resembles the providential Zeus of Aratus: he personally established the phases of the moon and other indications of storm and calm, so that we should be able to forecast good and bad weather and take appropriate precautions.<sup>32</sup> But in the immediately preceding paragraph, Jupiter plays a more threatening role: here he appears as the god of thunder, hurling bolts of lightning in the midst of a spring storm which lays low the ripening corn and terrifies man and beast.

The language here strongly recalls Lucretius' atomist accounts of bad weather in books 1 and 6 of the *DRN*.<sup>33</sup> The metaphor of the battle of winds is as old as Homer,<sup>34</sup> but the detailed working out in this passage seems specifically reminiscent of Lucretius.<sup>35</sup> Virgil, however, reverses the implications of his Lucretian models. In the *DRN*, violent forces of nature are frequently invoked as proof of the impersonality and indifference of the natural world towards human life;<sup>36</sup> and Lucretius attacks

<sup>32</sup> The passage marks the beginning of Virgil's extensive reworking of Aratus' *Diosemiai*, which extends from 351 to the beginning of the finale in 463. With 353, cf. *Phaen.* 10–12: αὐτὸς γὰρ τὰ γε σήματ' ἐν οὐρανῷ ἐστήριξεν, | . . . ἐσκέψατο δ' εἰς ἐνιαυτὸν | ἀστέρων οἱ κε μάλιστα . . . σημαίνουσιν ('for [Zeus] himself placed signs in the heavens . . . and appointed stars to give the clearest signs in their annual course'); for other references to divine providence, see *Phaen.* 265f., 408–35, 732, 741–3, 768–72, and cf. *idcirco* ('for this reason') in *Geo.* 1.231.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. esp. 1.271–6, 6.96–101, 253–61 and 357–78.

<sup>34</sup> *Il.* 16.765; *Od.* 5.291–6. Cf. Enn. *Ann.* 432–4 Sk. (note especially the verb *concurrunt*, 'clash', which is echoed by both Lucretius and Virgil), Virg. *Aen.* 1.81–123, *Ov. Trist.* 1.2.17–32, Sen. *Agam.* 465–97, Luc. 5.597–677; but the later examples are clearly influenced by Lucretius and/or Virgil (cf. Hardie (1986), pp. 237–9 on *Aen.* 1.81–123).

<sup>35</sup> Note esp. *ita* ('so', 320) ~ *ita* ('so', *DRN* 1.275), *cum sonitu fervetque* ('noisily, and [the sea] surges', 327, with strong alliteration of f, c, s) ~ *cum fremitu saevitque* ('with a roar, and [the wind] rages', *DRN* 1.276, same *sedes*, with strong alliteration of m, f, s), *concurrere proelia* ('clash in battle', 318) ~ *concurrunt . . . nubes contra pugnantibus ventis* ('clouds clash as the winds fight each other', *DRN* 6.97f.; cf. 2.118, 6.363ff.), *nimborum in nocte corusca* ('flashing in the midnight of rain-clouds', 328) ~ *nimborum nocte coorta* ('in the midnight of gathered rain-clouds', *DRN* 6.253; cf. 4.168–73), *fulmina molitur* ('[Jupiter] hurls thunderbolts', 329) ~ *commoliri tempestas fulmina* ('the storm [prepares] to hurl thunderbolts', *DRN* 6.255), *imbribus atris* ('pitch-black rain', 323) ~ *niger . . . nimbus* ('black cloud', *DRN* 6.256), *gravidam . . . segetem* ('the pregnant crop', 319) ~ *gravidam tempestatem* ('the pregnant storm', *DRN* 6.259). More generally, the destruction of crops in 319–21 recalls the destruction of trees in *DRN* 1.273–5 (based in turn on a Homeric simile, *Il.* 16.765–70) and 6.140f., and the fleeing men and animals in 330f. recall *DRN* 6.52f. and 6.261 (again modelled on a Homeric passage, *Il.* 4.275–9). Cf. also 324 and *DRN* 6.291, 327 and *DRN* 6.428, 334 and *DRN* 6.115.

<sup>36</sup> See e.g. 5.195–234 (partially quoted on p. 64 above). This passage is a crucial intertext throughout book 1: we have already noted echoes in the aetiology of *labor*, and further parallels are discussed on pp. 81–2 below.

with devastating satire the notion that thunderbolts are the weapons of the gods.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, the language which he employs in describing thunderstorms suggests that the mythological explanation contains an element of truth. Thunderbolts are 'forged' in the clouds (6.148f., 278 and 365) and then 'hurled' down to earth (328f.); the agencies involved, however, are wind, moisture and fire, not gods.

Virgil complicates the picture in several ways. First, he reinstates Jupiter, by merging the Lucretian image of the battle of winds into the traditional idea that the thunderbolt is wielded by the king of the gods rather than the impersonal *tempestas* ('storm'):

ipse pater media nimborum in nocte corusca  
fulmina molitur dextra, quo maxima motu  
terra tremit, fugere ferae et mortalia corda  
per gentis humilis stravit pavor; ille flagranti  
aut Atho aut Rhodopen aut alta Ceraunia telo  
deicit; ingeminant Austri et densissimus imber.

I.328–33

The father himself, in the midnight of rain-clouds, hurls thunderbolts from his flashing right hand. The great earth trembles with the shock, beasts flee and fearful panic crushes the hearts of all human races; he casts down his blazing weapon on Athos or Rhodope or high Ceraunia; the wind and pouring rain redouble.

By personalizing Lucretius' ambivalent view of nature as both creative and destructive, Virgil leaves us with a deeply unsettling image of the workings of divine providence.<sup>38</sup> Virgil's *natura*, like Lucretius', is often indifferent to man, but Virgil does not draw the Lucretian conclusion that the gods therefore have no concern with human beings. Instead, Jupiter is himself made responsible for the violent as well as the benign aspect of the natural world. Furthermore, there is no suggestion that Jupiter is punishing mortal wrongdoing, as he is in the striking Homeric simile which forms a secondary model for the Virgilian storm.<sup>39</sup> Virgil's farmers are apparently innocent victims of Jupiter's caprice.<sup>40</sup>

Secondly, the literal storm anticipates the storm of civil war at the end

<sup>37</sup> 6.379–422.

<sup>38</sup> The epithet *pater* ('father', 328) is particularly startling in this context. In addition to 353, it is also used in 121, where Jupiter ends the Golden Age. Cf. Härke (1936), pp. 35f.

<sup>39</sup> *Il.* 16.384–93. Cf. esp. 384 and *Geo.* 1.320 and 323; 385 and *Geo.* 311; 389–92 and *Geo.* 325–7. On the theodicy, see Janko (1992), *ad loc.*

<sup>40</sup> The terror of men and animals in 330f. is particularly important, because Lucretius' object is to *dispel* fear of thunderstorms, which he equates with superstitious fear of the gods: see esp. 5.1218–35, discussed on pp. 164–5 below.

of the book, where Roman battle lines ‘run together’ (*concurrere*, 489) like the winds of 318. Virgil hints that natural violence and human violence are connected by a kind of cosmic sympathy, calling into question the Lucretian view that, while violent conflict is inherent in nature, conflict on the human level arises directly from ambition and fear, and can thus be ‘cured’ by Epicurus’ *dicta*.<sup>41</sup>

Thirdly, the Lucretian passage is immediately followed by the famous advice *in primis venerare deos* (‘above all worship the gods’) and instructions for sacrifice to Ceres containing several reminiscences of Hesiod.<sup>42</sup> Thus, the Hesiodic view that hard work and piety will be rewarded is brought into conflict with the Lucretian view that the gods have no concern with human beings. Both views are problematized. Virgil accepts both the idea that the innocent suffer with the guilty *and* the idea that the gods demand and respond to worship, and thus leaves us with an ambiguous and troubling picture of the gods’ relationship with human beings and the natural world.

Jupiter’s apparent indifference to human suffering in this passage is balanced, as we have already seen, by the more benevolent aspect which he displays in the final section of book 1; and there is a further counterpoise in the ‘praise of spring’ in book 2 (323–45). Here, he wears the aspect of *Iuppiter Pluvius*, and comes down in showers<sup>43</sup> to fertilize Mother Earth and nourish all living things. Again, the passage is a tissue of

<sup>41</sup> See especially the proem to book 3; for a fuller discussion, see ch. 7 below.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. esp. *Op.* 327–37, 465–78 and 582–8. Hesiodic echoes are combined with implicit contradiction of Lucretius: Virgil’s festival – particularly the rustic dancing of 349f. – has points of resemblance with the rural picnic which is the setting for the invention of dance and music in *DRN* 5.1390–1404 (*laetis* . . . *in herbis*, ‘on the rich grass’, 339 ~ *in gramine molli*, ‘on the soft grass’, *DRN* 5.1392; *torta redimitus tempora quercu*, ‘having crowned his brows with an oak-wreath’, 349 ~ *caput* . . . *plexis redimire coronis*, ‘to crown their heads with woven garlands’, *DRN* 5.1399; and note especially the reference to ungainly dancing, corresponding to Virgil’s *motus incompósitos* (‘uncouth movements’, 350) in *DRN* 5.1401). The Lucretian feast, however, is purely secular; the laughter, cheerful chatter and *lascivia laeta* (‘joyful play’) described here contrast sharply with the *horror* (‘fear’) which constrains the human race to celebrate religious festivals in 1165–7.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. *fecundis imbribus Aether* . . . *descendit* (‘the Sky comes down in fertile rain’, 2.325f.) with *ruit imbriferum ver* (‘rainy spring pours down’, 1.313) and *imbribus atris* . . . *ruit arduus aether* (‘the lofty sky pours down in pitch-black rain’, 1.323f.). There is also a striking contrast between *diluit* (‘washes away’) in 1.326 and *alit* (‘nourishes’) in 2.327, and between *tremit* (‘trembles’) in 1.330 and *nec metuit* (‘does not fear’) in 2.333. Jupiter is *pater* (‘father’) in both places (in view of *omnipotens*, ‘almighty’, *pater Aether*, ‘father Sky’, in 2.325 must be identified with Jupiter).

Lucretian echoes. The *hieros gamos* ('sacred marriage') of Earth and Sky is evoked and demythologized in *DRN* 1.250f. and 2.991–7; the onset of spring is described in the Venus proem; and the spring-like conditions which prevailed at the time when animals and men were first born of earth are an important element in Lucretius' zoogony (5.780–820). All four passages are recalled here.<sup>44</sup> But once again, Virgil makes the mildness of spring a gift of the gods: *caeli indulgentia* ('the indulgence of heaven') in 345 seems deliberately ambiguous, suggesting divine providence as well as mild weather; and Aether, Tellus and Venus are not explicitly rationalized as they are by Lucretius.<sup>45</sup>

Further ambiguities persist: even the praise of spring is not a straightforward acknowledgement of the existence of a kindly providence. Here, both intertextuality and self-allusion are important. I have already noted the pairing of the passage with the more disturbing view of Jupiter in 1.311–34. The reference to the birth of animals and men also looks back to Deucalion's stones<sup>46</sup> and the 'aetiology of *labor*'. The zoogony here differs from these earlier passages in three important ways. Firstly, it seems more 'scientific', with its strong reminiscences of Lucretius' zoogony. Secondly, the new-born animals are no longer a *durum genus* ('tough race', 1.63), but *res tenerae* ('delicate things', 2.343) which could not survive without the kindly indulgence of heaven. And finally, the εὐκρασία ('mildness') of spring here seems explicitly to contradict the statement in 1.311–15 that violent storms occur in autumn and spring. In addition, the positive view of animal sexuality here conflicts with the violent attack on *amor* in book 3.<sup>47</sup> Do these contradictions make the praise of spring a 'lie', as Ross and Thomas<sup>48</sup> have argued? Or do they invalidate the pessimism of the earlier passages? Once again, I prefer to see

<sup>44</sup> Cf. esp. 325–7 with *DRN* 1.250f. and 2.991–3; 328 with *DRN* 1.256; 329 with *DRN* 2.997; 330 with *DRN* 2.994; 328–35 with *DRN* 1.1–20; 331 and 334–5 with *DRN* 5.805–11; 331 with *DRN* 5.806; 332–3 with *DRN* 5.780–2; 336–42 with *DRN* 5.783–805 (cf. also 925f. and 1427 for *terrea progenies*, 'the earthborn race'); 343–5 with *DRN* 5.818–20. There is a more detailed analysis in Klepl (1967), pp. 11f.

<sup>45</sup> The personification (if such it is) is much stronger in 325–7 than in either of the Lucretian models; and Lucretius deliberately undermines the image by emphasizing in 2.652–4 and 5.110–45 that Tellus is not a goddess, or even alive. Schäfer (1996), pp. 67–9, draws attention also to the more active role taken by *pater Aether* ('father Sky') in the Virgilian version, where Lucretius lays greater emphasis on the natural fertility of the earth (depicted by Virgil as the passive recipient of Jupiter's rains). On the *hieros gamos* in Lucretius, see further Schiesaro (1990), pp. 111–22, Gale (1994a), pp. 40f.

<sup>46</sup> Note especially the brief evocation of spring in 1.43f.

<sup>47</sup> Note especially *vere magis* ('especially in spring') in 3.272.

<sup>48</sup> Ross (1987), pp. 119–22; Thomas *ad* 323–45.

this as an example of polyphony or of the narrator's shifting perspective, particularly as precisely the same 'contradictions' occur in Lucretius. Spring is a mild and indulgent season in the proem and (less explicitly) in 1.803–11 and 5.737–40, but the time when thunderstorms are most prevalent in 6.357–78. Early man is tough, but enjoys a mild climate.<sup>49</sup> Animal sexuality is harmless and necessary (in the proem), but human sexuality is dangerous and problematic (in the finale to book 4).<sup>50</sup> Virgil simply draws attention to and plays up these equivocations, blurring the clear contours of Lucretius' world-view. As we saw in the previous chapter, Virgil tends to separate out and exaggerate the creative and destructive aspects of the natural cycle; what for Lucretius are merely changes of perspective<sup>51</sup> become in the *Georgics* radically different ways of seeing the world.

The ambiguous part played by Jupiter in book 1 is paralleled by the role of Bacchus as god of wine in book 2. The book is framed by passages which display his creative and destructive sides: in the proem, he appears as a god of fertility and abundance; but in the lines immediately preceding the finale (454–7) he is a dangerous power who maddens and destroys the centaurs.<sup>52</sup> Between the two fall the festive scenes of 380–96, which form a counterpart of the joyful Ceres festival in book 1 (338–50); and Bacchus puts in a brief final appearance in the finale (529) as object of the idealized farmer's worship.<sup>53</sup> In keeping with the positive tone of the book as a whole, the god's benevolent aspect is predominant; but the *vituperatio vitis* is an important passage, both because of its prominent position immediately before the finale and because it is connected in a number of ways with themes and complexes of imagery which dominate the *Georgics* as a whole.

Some of these themes have already been discussed, and others will be dealt with in more detail below; thus, I confine myself here to suggesting

<sup>49</sup> DRN 5.818–20. <sup>50</sup> Cf. Gale (1991), pp. 419–21.

<sup>51</sup> Early man, for example, was physically tough compared to modern man, but did not have the technological skills which would have enabled him to survive a modern climate. It should be noted, furthermore, that many of the apparent contradictions in the DRN contribute towards Lucretius' rhetorical strategy: the attractive images of the early books are gradually undermined or corrected as we progress through the poem and ideally come nearer to an acceptance of the natural cycle of birth and death, growth and decay. Cf. Gale (1994a) 204f. and 211–15 for discussion of similar 'discontinuities' in Lucretius' presentation of the sun and of Venus/Natura.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. pp. 37–8 above.

<sup>53</sup> The finale is linked both to the earlier festival scene and to the proem by verbal echoes: cf. *te libans, Lenaeae* ('pouring libations to you, Lenaeus', 529), *te, Bacche, vocant* ('they call on you, Bacchus', 388) and *te, Bacche, canam* ('I will sing of you, Bacchus', 2).



some connexions. In the first place, Bacchus stands as a kind of emblem for natural fertility and for the rampant growth of uncultivated plants which is one of the central themes of the book. On several occasions, the god's name is little more than a metonym for the vine;<sup>54</sup> and the images of abundance in the opening lines (4–6) look forward to the emphasis on fertility, variety and plenty in the first section of the book (particularly the catalogue of grape varieties, 89–108, and the *laudes Italiae*, where wine is listed amongst the products of Italy, 143f.). But it is made clear from the beginning of the book that the riot of natural growth needs to be tamed and disciplined if it is to be made productive: trees which grow spontaneously are strong and sturdy but infertile (47f.).<sup>55</sup> As a god of wildness and excess, Bacchus symbolizes the chaotic forces of nature which the farmer must strive to control.<sup>56</sup> But resistance to order and control is manifested not just in the external world, but also in human beings and their societies. Bacchus' 'maddening' of the centaurs was a semi-proverbial example of the dangers of excess;<sup>57</sup> the monstrous, half-human form of his victims suggests the fragility of civilization and the bestializing effect of the passions, particularly as the horse (as we shall see shortly) is elsewhere associated with passion and the difficulty of controlling it.

<sup>54</sup> See esp. 37, 113, 143, 228, 240, 275. In line 2, Bacchus is both the vine and the god.

<sup>55</sup> Note also the emphasis on the need for quasi-military discipline in 276–87 and 362–70, discussed on pp. 168 and 256 below.

<sup>56</sup> For Bacchus as a dangerous god, see for example Burkert (1983), pp. 216–26. Burkert notes that aetiological myths connected with wine 'overflow with gruesome details' (223); the suggestion of Frenzt (1967), pp. 6–27, that Virgil alludes obliquely to the *Erigone* of Eratosthenes thus gains in thematic relevance. (For a reconstruction of the *Erigone*, which seems to have included an aetiology for the sacrifice of the goat (cf. *Geo.* 2.380–96) and the story of Aristaeus as saviour of the Cean (cf. *Geo.* 1.14f.), as well as the deaths and catasterisms of Icarus, Erigone and the dog Maira, see Solmsen (1947). Frenzt argues that, by using the names Bootes (1.229), Erigone (1.33) and Canis (1.218) rather than the more usual Arcturus, Virgo and Sirius, Virgil recalls the myth and (perhaps) specifically Eratosthenes' version.)

<sup>57</sup> See esp. *Od.* 21.295–304, and cf. *A.P.* 7.725, 11.1 and 11.12. Compare the role of the Lapiths in 3.115–17, where they are associated with order and control through their invention of reins and riding (more usually credited to the centaurs themselves; see e.g. Palaephatus, *De Incred.* 1.5, Diod. Sic. 4.70.1, Pliny, *N.H.* 7.202). Cf. Farrell (1991), pp. 202–4, who links the references to the Lapiths here and to Chiron and Melampus in 3.549f. with the rise and fall of civilization, specifically the rise and fall of Athens in *DRN* 6.1–6 and the plague. It is significant, though, that *Bacchus*, not the Lapiths, is said to have 'subdued' the centaurs. This is no victory of civilization over brutality, but of the god's double-edged gift, which first makes the centaurs mad, and then destroys them. Like Jupiter in book 1, Bacchus is not unambiguously benevolent. Note also the maddening effect of wine (a standard cure for equine and other animal ailments; see e.g. *Col.* 6.6.3, 6.7.2 and 6.30.9) on the 'full' horses of 3.509–14; this in turn looks back to Venus' maddening of Glaucus' chariot-team in 266–8. (On the ambiguous status of the centaurs, who straddle the boundary between man and beast, nature and culture, see also Kirk (1970), pp. 152–62.)

Secondly, Bacchus is associated with poetry, particularly through the learned digression on the origins of tragedy and comedy which develops from the aetiology of the goat-sacrifice in 380–96,<sup>58</sup> but also in the proem, where he is called upon to remove his tragic buskins and aid the poet in treading the grapes – or, by the common convention which represents the poet as doing what he describes as being done, to aid him in composing the poem. Virgil's reflexions on the nature of poetic inspiration and the poet's role in society were discussed briefly in the previous chapter; I noted there that Bacchus' maddening of the centaurs can be linked with the representation elsewhere in the *Georgics* of the poet as *poeta furiosus*, and with the anarchic and unpredictable nature of poetic inspiration. Here again, Virgil can be seen as problematizing Lucretius, who in 1.922–30 employs the conventional imagery of Dionysiac inspiration to represent the seductive power of poetry: the language of ecstatic possession arguably conflicts with Lucretius' avowed purpose of freeing his reader from the tyranny of passion and irrationality. Once again, Virgil exploits the potential contradiction to the full.

A third set of thematic resonances is suggested by the context. At this point in the book, after dealing at length with the demanding processes of viticulture and the much less laborious cultivation of the olive, the poet has moved to the other extreme, celebrating the many uses of wild trees, which need no cultivation at all. The centauiromachy is introduced by way of contrast: Bacchus' ambiguous gift cannot compete with the bounty of the uncultivated earth. Recent interpreters have tended to read this development as an expression of ambivalence towards culture and civilization in general.<sup>59</sup> The cultivated vine appears to be regarded here as inferior to the products of untamed nature – a very different attitude from that of the proem to book 1, where Bacchus and Ceres were praised

<sup>58</sup> Etymologies of the words tragedy (from τράγος ~ *caper*, 'goat', 380) and comedy (from κῶμη ~ *pagos*, 'village', 382) are implied. For the rustic origins of drama in Italy, cf. Livy 7.2 and Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.139–46; Mynors (*ad* 380ff.) suggests Varro as a probable source. We can also (once again) find Lucretian echoes here: cf. n. 42 above on Lucretius' secularized discussion of the origins of dance and music, already recalled in the Ceres festival of book 1. Cf. especially *inter pocula laeti | mollibus in pratis* ('cheerfully tipsy in the soft meadows', 383f.) with *inter se prostrati in gramine molli* ('stretched out together on the soft grass', *DRN* 5.1392), *versibus incomptis* ('with uncouth verse', 386) with *extra numerum procedere* ('to dance un rhythmically', *DRN* 5.1401) and *ludunt risu . . . soluto* ('they clown and cracked ribald jokes', 386) with *risus dulcesque cachinni* ('joking and happy laughter', *DRN* 5.1403; cf. 1397).

<sup>59</sup> See e.g. Putnam (1979), pp. 139–42, Farrell (1983), pp. 243–7, Ross (1987), pp. 141–5; Thomas *ad* 454–7. On this interpretation, the *vituperatio vitis* prepares the reader for the primitivist stance of the finale, with its rejection of urban luxury and hankering after the simple virtue of the Golden Age.

for showing humans how to exchange water and acorns for wine and grain. This ambivalent attitude towards material progress resembles that of Lucretius, who sees many cultural developments as pernicious or at least superfluous and open to abuse. But once again, as in book 1, Virgil complicates the Lucretian picture by reinstating the gods in their traditional role as culture-heroes. For the Epicurean, material progress is a purely human affair, and the capacity to enjoy or misuse its products therefore lies entirely within our grasp. Virgil implies, on the contrary, that we may be at the mercy of forces beyond our control.

The madness inflicted on the centaurs by Bacchus is closely paralleled by the madness of Glaucus' mares, sent by Venus in 3.266–8;<sup>60</sup> but the gods generally play a much more restricted role in the last two books. In book 3, particularly, they are largely conspicuous for their absence, despite the address to Pales, Apollo and Pan in the opening lines. Indeed, the shepherd whose flock has been struck by disease is warned in 454–6 against over-reliance on prayer, when prompt action is required:

alitur vitium vivitque tegendo,  
dum medicas adhibere manus ad vulnera pastor  
abnegat et meliora deos sedet omina poscens.

The malady grows and thrives by concealment, while the shepherd shrinks from laying a surgeon's hand on the ulcer and sits idle, begging the gods for better omens.

The sentiment expressed in these lines is perhaps not very different from the Hesiodic ethos of book 1: prayer must be complemented by vigilance and hard work (even on festival days). Yet the satirical tone of the lines and the Lucretian language in which they are framed suggest a more radical scepticism.<sup>61</sup> Perhaps calling on the gods does no good at all; perhaps

<sup>60</sup> *dedit*, 'gave', 3.267 ~ *dona*, 'gifts', 2.454; *furor*, 'frenzy', 3.266 ~ *fiurentis*, 'frenzied', 2.455; and, in general, both 'gifts' result in violence and death.

<sup>61</sup> *alitur vitium vivitque tegendo*, 'the malady grows and thrives by concealment' ~ *ulcus* [sc. *amoris*] . . . *vivescit et inveterascit alendo*, 'the wound [of love] thrives and festers with feeding', *DRN* 4.1068 (where Lucretius is similarly emphasizing the need for prompt action). The symptoms described in 457ff. also recall the symptoms of Lucretius' plague: *ima dolor* . . . *lapsus ad ossa*, 'the pain spreads right into the bones', 457 ~ *intima pars* . . . *flagrabat ad ossa*, 'the inward parts blazed right to the bone', *DRN* 6.1168; *arida febris*, 'a parching fever', 458 ~ *sitis arida*, 'a parching thirst', *DRN* 6.1176; *incensos aestus*, 'burning heat', 459 ~ *incensum fervore*, 'burning hot', *DRN* 6.1145; and note also the Lucretian *balantum*, literally 'bleaters', 457 (cf. *balantibus*, *DRN* 6.1132; Thomas points out *ad loc.* that the plain substantive occurs only in these two passages and in late Latin). Compare the effect of the Lucretian language in 1.415–23 (discussed on pp. 84–6 below).

diseases are a purely natural phenomenon, and it is up to human beings to deal with them as best they can. The sceptical note struck here anticipates the close and sustained engagement with Lucretius in the account of the Noric cattle plague which concludes the book: here again prayer and sacrifice prove futile, and it is far from clear whether we are to see the disease as a punishment sent by the gods or as a random natural disaster.

The opening lines of Virgil's plague correspond closely to the beginning of Lucretius' account in *DRN* 6.1138–44: both poets begin with a scientific (or pseudo-scientific) explanation of how the disease descended from the air and spread amongst its human or animal victims. At the outset, Virgil's plague seems, like Lucretius', to be a purely natural occurrence, the product of chance and blind, mechanical forces rather than divine vengeance. Like Lucretius, Virgil emphasizes that the disease afflicts guilty and innocent alike: the highly anthropomorphizing lament for the dying plough-ox in 525–30 stresses the virtue and frugality of its former life. The religious conduct of the Norici also seems exemplary: unlike Lucretius' Athenians, they do not allow the cult of the gods to fall into neglect even when the plague is at its height. An attempt at sacrifice is described at some length (though in fact the ceremony cannot be completed, because the sick animal collapses on its way to the altar); the Norici also resort to extreme measures in their desire to adhere to the requirements of ritual, yoking monstrous wild oxen to Juno's chariot in the absence of domesticated animals.<sup>62</sup> But towards the end of the finale, there is a hint that there may be supernatural forces at work here.<sup>63</sup> The progress of the disease is

<sup>62</sup> 486–93; 531–3.

<sup>63</sup> Harrison (1979) argues that the Roman reader would automatically assume that the plague was a sign of divine anger, in accordance with standard religious practice (see e.g. Feeney (1998), pp. 81f.); the Norici—as traditional enemies of Rome—have forfeited the *pax deorum*, the goodwill of the gods, specifically through the ritual *error* of employing *impares uri* ('ill-matched aurochs', 532f.) in the rites of Juno. But the usual interpretation of lines 531–3 (the lack of oxen is a *result* of the plague) is much more natural, since, as Thomas remarks *ad loc.*, 'the phrase *tempore non alio* ['at no other time'] clearly situates the events of these lines within the *course* of the plague' (cf. also Foster (1988)). The reference to *hostes* ('enemies') in 513 is part of a common prayer formula and need imply nothing about the guilt or innocence of the Norici (for the apotropaic formula, cf. Prop. 2.4.27, 3.8.20; Ov. *Am.* 2.10.16f., 3.11.16, *Fast.* 3.494 (with Bömer (1957), *ad loc.*); and esp. Cat. 63.91; for the very common *di meliora* ('may the gods grant a better fate'), see Hickson (1993), p. 86 and *TLL* 2.2092.78–80; the two are combined in (e.g.) Nic. *Ther.* 186 and [Tib.] 3.4.1–3). Moreover, the emphasis throughout the account is on the horrific deaths of innocent animals rather than on their owners (whether guilty or otherwise). Lucretius similarly emphasizes the sufferings of 'loyal dogs' (1222–4); he may be reacting to criticism of Homer, who has Apollo slay innocent dogs and mules before he comes to the guilty Achaeans in *Iliad* 1 (see Gale (1994a), pp. 113f.).

embodied in the nightmarish figure of the Fury Tisiphone, who emerges from the underworld, driving Sickness and Fear before her and growing greater day by day. Given the role played elsewhere by the Furies as instruments of divine vengeance, we might take these lines as more than metaphor, and see the plague as a punishment inflicted on the Norici for some unspecified crime.<sup>64</sup> Once again, the end of the narrative seems at odds with its beginning. It is far from clear whether the plague is to be seen as a natural occurrence or as a divine punishment, and it is significant, I think, that we are in the same position as the Norici themselves in this respect. Since the sickness itself makes sacrifice and divination impossible, the usual channels of communication between human beings and the gods are no longer available. The Norici have no way of knowing what – if anything – their error has been, and no way of placating the gods. Is this (as Lucretius would argue) because the gods are indifferent to human affairs, and have not in any case sent the plague? Or should we assume that the Norici have somehow deserved this punishment, or that the gods are simply arbitrary and unconcerned by human suffering? Once again, the poem in itself gives us no clear and unambiguous answer.<sup>65</sup>

The lighter tone of the final book demands a more encouraging picture of the gods, though their role is again relatively restricted here (especially in the first half). Both Jupiter and Aristaeus figure as *heuretai* in aetiological myths which emphasize the rewards of virtue and *pietas*: the peculiarly cooperative and passionless nature of the bees is a gift granted to them by Jupiter, in recompense for feeding him in infancy, while Aristaeus' pious obedience to divine instruction is rewarded by the discovery of the *bougonia*.<sup>66</sup> These myths are complemented by the more philosophical

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Harrison (1979), p. 33 and n. 97, who compares Tisiphone's role in *Aen.* 6.554ff. Some support for this reading might be drawn from parallels between the plague and the disastrous consequences of civil war lamented in the finale to book 1 (see e.g. Nosarti (1996), pp. 35–85): Virgil toys briefly in 1.501f. with the notion of war as a punishment for the guilt inherited by the Roman race from its progenitor Laomedon.

<sup>65</sup> For a similar interpretation of the role of the gods in the *Aeneid*, cf. O'Hara (1993): like the Norici, Dido 'lives in a world where it is difficult to know the truth [about the nature and will of the gods]' (p. 112).

<sup>66</sup> Note especially Cyrene's instruction *facilis venerare Napaeas* ('worship the easy-going nymphs', 535f.), which (as Thomas remarks *ad loc.*) recalls the poet's own earlier advice, *in primis venerare deos* ('above all worship the gods', 1.338). Cyrene's libation (380–6) also finds immediate confirmation. But it is important to remember that Orpheus does not find the gods so easy to placate. Unlike the *faciles Napaeae*, the infernal gods do not know how to forgive or respond to human prayers (470, 489); and Orpheus' death *inter sacra deum* ('in the course of sacred rites') recalls the dangerous Bacchus of book 2.

conception of divinity expressed in 219–27: the bees, it is said, have a share in the ‘divine mind’ which pervades the universe, and thus do not truly die but fly up to join the stars. This pantheistic conception particularly recalls the Stoicism of Aratus’ proem,<sup>67</sup> and remythologizes Lucretius’ rationalized version of the soul’s ascent to heaven:

cedit enim retro, de terra quod fuit ante,  
in terras et quod missumst ex aetheris oris,  
id rursum caeli rellatum templa receptant.  
nec sic interimit mors res ut materiai  
corpora conficiat, sed coetum dissipat ollis.

DRN 2.999–1003<sup>68</sup>

For what came from earth in the first place returns to the earth again, and what was despatched from the shores of heaven is sent back and received again into heaven’s precincts. Nor does death destroy things so utterly that it annihilates the particles of matter; rather it dissolves their unions.

When Lucretius denies the finality of death, he means something very different from the personal survival implied by the Virgilian passage: the impersonal atoms survive the death of the individual, just as the impersonal hive (elsewhere in book 4) survives the deaths of individual bees. It is important, however, that Virgil does not actually endorse the notion of reunion with the world-soul, which is merely reported as the view of *quidam* (‘some people’, 219), and coexists in book 4 with other conceptions of death and immortality (the survival of the community as compensation for the death of the individual; the irrevocable finality of Eurydice’s death; the immortality of the *heures*, won through his own labours; and the immortality conferred by the poet).<sup>69</sup> The air of uncertainty which I have been tracing through the poem persists.

### *The farmer and the land*

Throughout the poem, Virgil offers us brief glimpses of the gods’ actions and their relations with human beings which seem hard to reconcile with each other: Jupiter is both benevolent and indifferent, *labor* is both a

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Thomas *ad* 221–2 (comparing *Phaen.* 2–4).

<sup>68</sup> Note also the Lucretian phrasing of lines 222 and 223 (cf. esp. DRN 1.163 and 340). On the philosophical and literary antecedents of the Lucretian passage, see Schiesaro (1990), pp. 111–22.

<sup>69</sup> On these different views of death and immortality, see pp. 53–4 above.

blessing and a curse, prayer is both vital and useless. When we shift the focus from the farmer's relationship with the gods to his relationship with his environment, the contradictory implications of different passages become still more striking. In chapter 2, I portrayed the farmer's calling as a struggle against entropy: the order and productivity of the agricultural landscape is constantly threatened by bad weather, pests, weeds, the undisciplined luxuriance of wild plants, the chaotic forces of sexuality and disease. But Virgil's portrait of the natural world also has another side to it: in other parts of the poem (particularly book 2), the earth is portrayed as a generous and hospitable habitat, which pours forth its fruits for the taking, like the lands of Hesiod's Golden Race. The tendency to disorder manifested on earth is also counterbalanced by the divinely-ordained regularity of the heavens.

It is no coincidence that Lucretius also paints both 'optimistic' and 'pessimistic' pictures of agricultural production in different parts of the *DRN*. Where he wishes to illustrate the theory that the earth is declining towards its ultimate collapse, or to show that it is too imperfect to have been designed by providence as a habitat for human beings, the emphasis is on infertility and on the threats posed by weeds and bad weather. We have already seen that two passages which argue along these lines (2.1157-74 and 5.195-217, quoted on p. 64 above) are important intertexts for the 'aetiology of *labor*' and for *Georgics* 1 as a whole. But in other parts of the *DRN*, the accent is on the fertility and productivity of the land. So, for example, Lucretius concludes his series of arguments for the complementary propositions that nothing can come of nothing or be destroyed into nothing with a lively picture of new growth nourished by the 'death' of raindrops in the lap of mother earth:

postremo pereunt imbres, ubi eos pater aether  
in gremium matris terrae praecipitavit;  
at nitidae surgunt fruges ramique virescunt  
arboribus, crescunt ipsae fetuque gravantur;

...

hinc fessae pecudes pingui per pabula laeta  
corpora deponunt et candens lacteus umor  
uberibus manat distentis; hinc nova proles  
artubus infirmis teneras lasciva per herbas  
ludit lacte mero mentis percussa novellas.

1.250-61<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Cf. also 1.10-20, 2.589-99 and 991-8, 5.821-5.

Finally, the rains perish when father Sky has sent them into the lap of mother Earth; but bright crops spring up and the branches of the trees grow green, the trees themselves grow and are laden with fruit . . . And so flocks wearied by their own weight rest their bodies in the rich pasture, and the white milky liquor drips from their swollen udders; so the new-born young frolic playfully with shaky limbs on the soft grass, their tender minds drunk on pure milk.

The account of the development of agriculture at the end of book 5 concludes on a similarly positive note, with a vignette of an orderly agricultural landscape:

ut nunc esse vides vario distincta lepore  
omnia, quae pomis intersita dulcibus ornant  
arbustisque tenent felicibus obsita circum. 5.1376–8

Just as nowadays you can see the whole landscape divided up with charming variety and adorned with sweet orchards planted between the crops, while rich vineyards are thickly planted all around.

The images of beauty, abundance and variety in these two passages also have their counterpart in the *Georgics*, particularly in the ‘praises’ of book 2.<sup>71</sup> But the hyperbole which Virgil employs in his celebration of nature’s bounty is calculated to bring out the slight inconcinnity between the different Lucretian perspectives. While book 1, with its emphasis on *labor* and degeneration, plays up the darker side of Lucretius’ picture, in book 2 the fertility of the land is treated as something almost supernatural: the mildness of spring is a sign of divine providence (345); Italy is a land of perpetual spring, free from dangerous animals and poisonous plants, where trees and livestock bear offspring twice yearly (140–54); and the just earth willingly pours forth food for the virtuous countryman (460, 500f.). The phrase *sponte sua* (‘of its own accord’), suggesting the magical fertility of the Golden Age when agricultural labour was unknown, acts as a kind of refrain (11, 47, 501).<sup>72</sup> The clash with the ‘aetiology of *labor*’, which sets the Golden

<sup>71</sup> For echoes of 5.1361–78 in the opening paragraphs of *Geo.* 2, see p. 210, n. 34 below; the emphasis on the attractiveness of the orderly landscape, though a common *topos*, is paralleled in Virgil’s description of the *quincunx* at 2.284–7 (and cf. 211, where new plough-land created by the clearing of old woodland is described as ‘shining’ (*enituit*)). The passage from *DRN* 1 is recalled in all three of the ‘praises’: cf. *Geo.* 2.143f. with *DRN* 1.252–6; 325–8 with *DRN* 1.250f., 254 and 256; 2.524f. with *DRN* 1.257–9.

<sup>72</sup> On features of the Golden Age in book 2, see further pp. 218–19 below.



Age firmly in the past, is striking; and we are reminded at the very end of book 2 that the rule of Saturn is long past (536–40). Two extreme views are juxtaposed: unlike Lucretius, Virgil does not attempt to reconcile them.<sup>73</sup>

Clashes of this kind can also be found on a smaller scale, within each of the first two books. In book 1, for example, two contrasting passages span the end of Virgil's 'works' and the beginning of his 'days'.<sup>74</sup> The first (176–203) arises out of the poet's instructions for building a threshing-floor: once again, pests are seen as a threat, and seeds must be hand-picked to counteract the tendency of everything in nature to go to the bad. The farmer is like an oarsman rowing against the current, in his never-ending struggle against his harsh environment. But only thirty lines later (231–58), the tone has changed dramatically: here the emphasis is on order, predictability<sup>75</sup> and divine providence, as the poet explains how the gods have graciously granted (*munere concessae divum*, 'granted by the gods' gift', 238) two of the five terrestrial zones as a human habitation.

Strikingly, the gloomy lines leading up to the rower simile and the providentialist account of the zones both call upon the same Lucretian intertext – a passage which will already be in the reader's mind because Virgil has just alluded to it in the 'aetiology of *labor*'.<sup>76</sup> I refer once again to the anti-teleological argument of *DRN* 5.195–234. There is an

<sup>73</sup> An important passage which goes some way towards reconciling the apparent contradiction between the two perspectives in Lucretius is 5.821–36, where the poet explains that the earth is like a woman past the age for child-bearing. Thus it can no longer give birth to the large animals that it once produced; on the other hand, its productive capacity is only reduced, not completely exhausted: *sic igitur mundi naturam totius aetas | mutat et ex alio terram status excipit alter, | quod tulit ut nequeat, possit quod non tulit ante* ('so age changes the nature of the whole world and one state of being gives way to another, so that the earth no longer bears what it once could, but bears things it could not before', 834–6). Also important is the poet's 'debunking' of the Golden Age in 925–1010: the concept of spontaneous fertility (*sponte sua*, 'of its own accord', 938; cf. 961) is severely reduced and rationalized. Whereas Lucretius emphasizes the continuity between past and present (early man lived on the same kinds of wild fruits as can still be seen today), Virgil imports features of the mythical Golden Age into the present.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Farrell (1991), pp. 172–80.

<sup>75</sup> Note especially *certis* ('fixed') and *regit* ('regulates') in 231f. *Idcirco* ('for this reason', 231) also anticipates the explicit statement in 353 that the movements of the heavenly bodies were providentially appointed by Jupiter for the succour of human beings.

<sup>76</sup> And earlier still, in 45f. (see n. 3 above). Cf. Farrell (1983), pp. 39–54.

unmistakable echo in 197f.,<sup>77</sup> and indeed the whole section dealing with natural degeneration is very Lucretian both in phrasing and in its train of thought.<sup>78</sup> The description of the five zones, on the other hand, *reverses* Lucretius, who regards the fact that three-fifths of the earth are uninhabitable – like the hardships faced by the farmer – as evidence that the earth was not providentially designed as a human habitation.

This reversal is partly achieved by combining Lucretius' account with allusions to other models. The description of the zones itself is quite a close imitation of a passage from Eratosthenes' *Hermes*,<sup>79</sup> but the Eratosthenic framework is combined with Lucretian phrasing. Notably, the temperate zones are said here to have been granted by the gods to *mortalibus aegris* ('wretched mortals'), where Eratosthenes simply says that they are inhabited by ἀντίποδες ἀντίποδες ('antipodean men').<sup>80</sup> The Virgilian phrase is also used by Lucretius in a context of 'divine' benefaction – the proem to book 6, where the godlike Epicurus is praised as the saviour of mankind. Once again, Virgil undoes Lucretius' displacement of the gods from their traditional role as benefactors.

<sup>77</sup> *vidi lecta diu et multo spectata labore | degenerare tamen ni vis humana quotannis | maxima quaeque manu legeret* ('I have seen seeds chosen carefully and watched over with great labour degenerate all the same unless human strength chooses the biggest ones by hand each year', 197–9) ~ *quod superest arvi, tamen id natura sua vi | sentibus obducit, ni vis humana resistat* ('as for the lands that remain, even these would be covered with brambles by the force of nature if human strength did not resist her', *DRN* 5.206f.) and *et tamen interdum magno quaesita labore* ('and even so, sometimes the crops which we have tended with so much labour . . .', 213).

<sup>78</sup> For echoes of *DRN* 1.400–17, see pp. 162–3 below; the general train of thought in 197–200 also recalls *DRN* 5.306–17 and 2.1173f. The latter passage may have suggested the image of the oarsman, if the MS reading *ad scopulum* ('onto the rocks') is retained (as I think it should be) in 1174: cf. Segura Ramos (1982) and Possanza (1990). Other examples of Lucretian vocabulary: *victa fatiscat* ('crumbles and cracks'; cf. *fessa fatisci*, 'grow old and crack', *DRN* 3.458 and 5.308 – in both cases referring to degeneration and decay), *contemplator item* ('look, too'; cf. *contemplator enim*, 'so look', *DRN* 2.114 and 6.189), *magna cum magno* ('great . . . with great . . .'; cf. esp. *DRN* 4.902, 5.644; this kind of polyptoton is generally very common in Lucretius, but rare in Virgil, as Thomas points out *ad loc.*; cf. Wills (1996), p. 227), *vidi* ('I have seen'; cf. *DRN* 4.577 and 6.1044 and the frequent appeals to common experience throughout the *DRN*). A characteristically *un*-Lucretian touch, however, is the word *fatiscit* ('fate') in 199; see further p. 164 below.

<sup>79</sup> Fr. 16 Powell. See Thomas *ad loc.* for details.

<sup>80</sup> Note also *dextra laevaque*, 'to the right and left' ~ *DRN* 4.276 for ἐκάτερθε ('on either side') and *via secta*, 'a path is cut' ~ *DRN* 5.272 = 6.638 (though in a different sense). It is perhaps also significant that Virgil omits to describe the εὐκρασία ('mildness') of the temperate zones (lines 15–19 in Eratosthenes), which are dealt with rather perfunctorily in 237f. (cf. Thomas *ad loc.*). This brings his account more closely into line with Lucretius', where the emphasis is of course on the climatic *imbalance* in the polar and equatorial zones.

The zones were also described by Aratus, who is echoed a few lines later in 243–6.<sup>81</sup> For Aratus, the celestial zones seem to constitute an example of Zeus' providential concern for mankind, since he emphasizes their 'usefulness' (463) and the perfection of their design (529–33).<sup>82</sup> In effect, Lucretius has appropriated the Stoic argument that the perfection of the world proves the existence of divine providence and stood it on its head, by using the zones as evidence against divine providence (*only* two-fifths of the earth is habitable). Virgil turns this around again, emphasizing the gods' beneficence, and so counterbalances the Lucretian tone of the earlier passage.

This time, rather than playing up tensions which already exist in Lucretius' poem, Virgil complicates the Lucretian picture by offering us two radically different responses to the same passage. The first is sympathetic: Virgil seems here to accept the view that our world is a far from perfect environment, indifferent if not hostile to its human inhabitants. But in the second passage Lucretius' account of the terrestrial zones is reworked in such a way that it can be used as 'evidence' for the opposite hypothesis: the existence of two temperate zones between polar ice and equatorial desert can be interpreted as proof of the gods' providential care, rather than their sublime indifference. Here again, Lucretian rationalism and Aratean providentialism are offered side by side as plausible ways of understanding the world.

The notion that the orderly and predictable movements of the heavens and the existence of signs which enable us to forecast the weather are indications of Jupiter's providential care for human beings is subjected to further scrutiny later in book 1. There is a marked emphasis throughout the second half of the book on regularity and reliability,<sup>83</sup> which is explicitly attributed in 351–5 to 'the father himself'. Virgil's confidence in the divinely-ordained system which he describes echoes the stance adopted by his Aratean model; but at the same time, Aratus is played off against Lucretius, who repeatedly challenges the idea that regularity can

<sup>81</sup> Cf. *Phaen.* 45–8.

<sup>82</sup> *Phaen.* 462–544. For the zones as evidence of the providential design of the cosmos, cf. Heraclit. *Quaest. Hom.* 48–51, Philo, *Quis Rer. Div. Her.* 147. The zones were also discussed by Chrysippus (*SVF* 2.649) and Posidonius (Strabo 2.2.1f.).

<sup>83</sup> Note especially the striking repetition *certis* . . . *signis* ('fixed signs', 351), *certis* . . . *signis* ('fixed signs', 394), *certissima signa* ('firmly fixed signs', 439), picking up *certis* . . . *partibus* ('fixed divisions', 231); cf. also 425f. and 432.

be taken as evidence for divine control.<sup>84</sup> For Lucretius, the predictable behaviour of animals and plants and the heavenly bodies is a manifestation of the 'laws' of nature – the same laws which decree that the earth must decline in fertility as it draws nearer to its final and inevitable destruction. Something very like this rationalist position is suggested in *Geo.* 1.415–23, where Virgil, having explained how the behaviour of birds and various other animals can be used to predict the end of a rainy spell, continues:

haud equidem credo, quia sit divinitus illis  
ingenium aut rerum fato prudentia maior;  
verum ubi tempestas et caeli mobilis umor  
mutavere vias et Iuppiter uvidus Austris  
denset erant quae rara modo, et quae densa relaxat,  
vertuntur species animorum, et pectora motus  
nunc alios, alios dum nubila ventus agebat,  
concipiunt: hinc ille avium concentus in agris  
et laetae pecudes et ovantes gutture corvi.

I certainly do not believe that intelligence is granted them by divine agency, or a more intimate knowledge of things by fate; but when the weather and the changeful humidity of the atmosphere have altered their courses, and Jupiter, damp from the south winds, has condensed what just now was rare and rarefied what was dense, their mood changes and they feel different emotions in their breasts from those they felt when the wind was driving the clouds along; hence all that choir of birds in the fields, hence the flocks are happy and the ravens crow.

This rationalizing explanation seems at least on the surface to be in direct contradiction with the earlier statement that the constellations and weather signs were appointed by Jupiter. The whole passage could

<sup>84</sup> Regularity and providence in Aratus: see esp. *Phaen.* 5–13 and 741–3; note also Aratus' assurance of the reliability of his teaching in the closing lines (1153f.), and see further Hunter (1995). On the other hand, the prominence of the key-word *certus* ('fixed') suggests Lucretius, who uses the adjective no fewer than 97 times. For the regular recurrence of various natural phenomena, particularly the movements of the heavenly bodies, see especially *DRN* 5.656–79, 731–50 and 1436–9: note the almost incantatory repetition of the phrase *tempore* or *ordine certo* ('at a fixed time'/'in a fixed order') in all three passages (656, 661, 667, 669, 670, 671, 672f., 679; 732, 736, 748, 749, 750; 1439). Lucretius is eager to emphasize that there is nothing supernatural in these regular patterns (*nec . . . mirabile*, 'it is not surprising', 666; *minus est mirum*, 'it is less surprising', 748). On the concept of natural law in the *DRN*, see further pp. 202–4 below.

virtually come straight out of Lucretius,<sup>85</sup> were it not for one discordant note – the reference to Jupiter as agent of the changes in atmospheric pressure which motivate the animals' behaviour (418). The poet seems to suggest that even the acceptance of a scientific explanation does not finally preclude the possibility that the gods are – on some level – in control.<sup>86</sup> It may not be absolutely impossible to reconcile the different 'voices' – one Stoicizing, one leaning towards Epicurean materialism – which speak here and in 351–5. Nevertheless, the change in emphasis is dramatic, leaving the reader in a state of some uncertainty. Earlier in the

<sup>85</sup> The question is not explicitly discussed in the *DRN*, but note the brief reference to birds as 'weather-prophets' in 5.1083–6, where it is apparently taken for granted that they are reacting to changes in climatic conditions (*mutant cum tempestatibus una | raucisonos cantus*, 'they alter their raucous song according to the weather', 1083f.); see also Epic. *Ep. ad Pyth.* 98 and 115f., where divine involvement is explicitly denied. *divinitus* ('by divine agency') in *Geo.* 1.415 is a Lucretian catch-word: it occurs eight times in the *DRN*, but is otherwise very rare in poetry (aside from this line – the only instance in Virgil – and the Lucretian examples, the *TLL* cites only Plaut. *Amph.* 1105 and *Curc.* 248 and Enn. *Ann.* 11 V (=9 Sk.)). The pattern of argument is also very Lucretian: for rejection of a competing view followed by resumption with *verum* ('but rather'), compare e.g. *DRN* 4.741 and 6.100; with *haud equidem credo* ('I certainly do not believe'), compare Lucretius' frequent first person interjections (e.g. *ut opinor*, 'I believe', 1.854, 2.201, 551, 1153 etc.) and warnings to the reader not to be misled by rival theories (e.g. *procul est ut credere possis*, 'it is far from credible', 4.856). Compare also the reference to condensation and rarefaction in 419 with Lucretius' explanation for the properties of the spring of Hammon in 6.861–78 (and his rejection of Heraclitean theories in 1.645–64). The anaphora *alios, alios* ('now one, now another') in 421 picks up Lucretius' *alios alio* from the discussion of bird cries in *DRN* 5.1081; and the phrases *nubila ventus agebat*, 'the wind was driving the clouds along', 421 and *laetae pecudes*, 'flocks are happy', 423 also recall Lucretian expressions (*venti nubila portant*, 'the winds carry the clouds along', 6.505; flocks (*pecudes*) regularly occupy *pabula laeta* ('rich [lit. happy] meadows') in Lucretius (e.g. 1.14, 1.257, 2.317, 2.875), and herds (*armenta*) are also frequently characterized as *laeta*, 'happy').

<sup>86</sup> Thomas (*ad loc.*) takes *Iuppiter* as a metonym, 'here amounting to little more than "rain"' – Lucretius would not necessarily disapprove of such a usage (cf. *DRN* 2.655–60). But in a context where the issue of Jupiter's control of the weather and of other 'natural' phenomena has been raised more than once, it is hard to deny that Virgil's phrasing has any further significance. We might compare here the arguments advanced by Quintus (on behalf of the Stoics) in book 1 of Cicero's *De Divinatione*: see especially 118, where he points out that one can still believe in the operation of divine providence without necessarily seeing the hand of god behind every particular portent (*non placet Stoicis singulis iecorum fissis aut avium cantibus interesse deum . . . sed ita a principio inchoatum esse mundum, ut certis rebus certa signa praecurrerent*, 'the Stoics do not believe that the gods intervene every time a sacrificial victim has a divided liver, or every time a bird sings . . . but that the world was designed from the beginning in such a way that fixed signs should precede fixed phenomena', 118). Cf. also 1.12 and Sen. *N.Q.* 2.32.3f. For other views, see Cic. *N.D.* 2.160 (Balbus claims that some birds were actually created for the purpose of giving omens) and Pliny, *N.H.* 8.102f. (apparently attributing animal prognostications to cosmic sympathy and/or the greater acuteness of animals' senses rather than to special, supernatural powers); see further Beagon (1992), pp. 142–7.

book, the farmer was depicted as struggling for survival in a hostile environment; then the poet introduced the notion that he might, rather, live in harmony with the rhythms of a world providentially designed for the sake of its human inhabitants. This passage raises a third possibility (also, on my reading, to be found in the description of the storm in 316–34): it may be that the universe is simply indifferent to our needs, whether or not it is ultimately in the hands of the gods.<sup>87</sup>

The opening paragraphs of book 2 go some way towards reconciling these disparate perspectives. Here, the natural world is depicted as *both* abundant and chaotic: uncultivated trees are strong and sturdy and infinitely various, but remain unproductive until tamed and disciplined by the farmer's civilizing hand. Like *natura* in Lucretius' poem,<sup>88</sup> the farmer creates order and consistency out of the unrealized potential represented here by plants in their natural state.

In the opening lines of the book, the emphasis is on abundance and variety. Many species spring up spontaneously, and are sustained by *natura* (10–13, 47–9); they grow tall and leafy (*altae*, 'tall', 14; *frondet*, 'puts forth leaves', 15; *densissima*, 'very thick', 17; *ingenti . . . umbra*, 'broad shade', 19; *laeta et fortia*, 'healthy and strong', 48) without the need for human intervention. Yet this natural growth is undisciplined and unproductive: trees which are not transplanted or propagated by artificial methods will be infertile (48) and stunted in their growth (55f.), and their fruit will degenerate, 'forgetting' its former sweetness (59f.). The movement here from *natura* to *usus* ('learning gained from experience', 20–2) reflects the underlying principle of Lucretius' culture-history: man learns from nature, then improves his methods by experience.<sup>89</sup> Characteristically, this

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Schäfer (1996), pp. 44–53, who argues that Virgil's rationalization of the weather signs is not incompatible with the view that the organization of the cosmos as a whole is ultimately attributable to a providential Jupiter. But Schäfer's analysis again seems too tidy: if, as she argues, the gods do not intervene in the day-to-day running of Virgil's world, what are we to make of the references to Jupiter and Ceres in 328f. and 147, and why does the poet advise the farmer to pray for good weather?

<sup>88</sup> For Lucretius, our world comes into existence by random chance: the chaotic movements of the atoms happen to fall into a pattern which results in the creation of a stable cosmos (1.1021–8 ≈ 5.419–31, 2.1058–63). But within this cosmos, the *foedera naturae* or 'pacts of nature' dictate that like produces like and that natural processes continue with unfailing regularity (despite the essential randomness of atomic motion). See further pp. 203–5 below.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. especially *DRN* 5.1452f. The progression is particularly clear in Lucretius' account of the invention of agriculture, 5.1361–9, which lies behind Virgil's whole account of propagation methods: cf. p. 210, n. 34 below.

Lucretian basis is overlaid with hints that the fertility of the land is the responsibility of providential gods: the appeal to Bacchus in the proem is picked up by the series of epithets associating trees (particularly those propagated by natural methods) with the appropriate deities (15–18, 64–7; cf. also *nemorum* . . . *sacrorum*, ‘sacred groves’, 21).<sup>90</sup> The earth, then, is *both* fertile, by divine will, *and* has a tendency to degeneration if left untended. The crucial mediating factor is *cultus* (‘cultivation’, ‘culture’, 35, 51): rampant natural growth must be tamed, disciplined and taught the *artes* of civilization (51f., 62).<sup>91</sup>

The catalogue of grape varieties which follows (89–108) contributes further to the emphasis on variety and fertility; but it is immediately followed by an appeal to the Lucretian notion of limits (line 109 is virtually a quotation of *DRN* 1.166). Not all crops can be grown everywhere. Although this statement begins the build-up towards the *laudes Italiae* – with its celebration of the almost miraculous fertility of Italy, land of perpetual spring – it also initiates a movement away from the profusion of the opening section of the book to a more cautious assessment of the earth’s productive capacity in the central segment.<sup>92</sup> In lines 177–258, the poet deals at some length with different soil types. Throughout this section, there are hints of personification. Several of the different soils have distinct ‘personalities’: the rich soil is ‘cheerful’ (*laeta*, 184) while chalk is ‘difficult’ and ‘grudging’ (*difficiles, maligni*, 179), and salt or cold soils are qualified as ‘wicked’ (*malus*, 243, *sceleratum*, 256).<sup>93</sup> Some soils are

<sup>90</sup> Cf. also 3.332–4. For the (Stoic) argument that the fertility of the earth is proof of god’s providential care for human beings, see e.g. Cic. *N.D.* 2.156–8.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Virgil’s treatment of pruning in 362–70. It is interesting to compare the comments of Zanker (1988) on the ornamental use of vines on the Ara Pacis: he notes that an impression of luxuriant growth is combined with a strictly symmetrical design, and comments that this ‘perhaps . . . reflects on the aesthetic level the almost fanatical preoccupation of the Augustan Age with law and order’ (p. 81).

<sup>92</sup> Note (in addition to the Lucretian echo) that line 109 reverses *Edl.* 4.39, *omnis feret omnia tellus* (‘every land will bear everything’). On the Golden Age theme in the opening section of book 2, see further pp. 210–19 below.

<sup>93</sup> The adjective *laeta* (‘fertile’, ‘joyful’) is of course common in agricultural contexts, but it is perhaps justifiable to speak of personification here, in view of the concentration of other words imputing personality to the different soil types – the effect is cumulative. Note especially *ingenium* (‘character’) in 177; *robur* (‘strength’) and *color* (‘colouring’) are also commonly used of people and animals (for *robur*, see *OLD* s.v., §§5 and 6; for *color*, see *TLL* 3.1718.35–1720.18). *malignus* (‘grudging’) seems not to be used of things before Virgil (cf. *TLL* 8.183.72–184.7); on *sceleratum* (‘wicked’) see Thomas *ad loc.* Note also *gaudent* (‘rejoice’, 181), *ignava* (‘idle’, 208), *rudis* (‘rough’, ‘untried’, 211) and the active verbs in 189–91, 198f., 213–21 (esp. *negant*, ‘deny’, 215; *vult*, ‘wishes’, 218) and 228.

characterized as helpful, some as malign. Here the poet offers us a slightly different way of resolving the dichotomy which he has created: the earth is fertile in some places, barren in others. Here again, Virgil's pupil is in a position to overcome his difficulties, provided that he follows the poet's instructions: almost any soil will grow *something* (even 'grudging' chalk 'delights' in olive-trees). *cultus* will once again enable him to triumph over the problems posed by a hostile environment.

At this level, book 2 goes some way towards resolving the tensions created in book 1 (even as they are deepened by the hyperbolic language of the *laudes*). Nature is both generous and grudging, abundant and chaotic. The farmer's task is to exploit the fertility of the natural world, while taming and civilizing it. Yet, as we have already seen, the opposition between nature and culture is not as straightforward as this summary might suggest. In the last third of the book, complicating factors begin to emerge: the olive and other 'natural' trees have their virtues, while the vine – product of culture, and gift of Bacchus – is open to abuse. The olive is the plant of peace, whereas wine is linked with violence and madness.<sup>94</sup> In the finale, agriculture is associated not with 'progress' and civilization but with the primitive past; spontaneity (501) is now an emblem of humble simplicity, not of unruliness to be disciplined.<sup>95</sup> If the Lapiths in book 3 embody the human capacity to control and civilize nature, the Centaurs at the end of book 2 suggest that the boundary between civilization and brute violence is perilously narrow. This theme is developed further in book 3, where the poet focusses on the relationship between human beings and the animal kingdom.

### *Humans and animals*

#### Animal instincts

The themes of wildness and control, order and disorder, civilization and barbarism which I introduced in the last section can be related in obvious ways to the relationships between human beings and animals. The notion that human rationality and civilized patterns of behaviour enable us to

<sup>94</sup> Contrast *non ulla est oleis cultura* ('olives need no cultivation', 420) with the emphasis on *cultus* in the earlier part of the book (35, 51).

<sup>95</sup> Compare Lucretius' primitives, who also live off what the earth produces spontaneously (5.937f.), and have no fear of war or shipwreck (999–1010; cf. *Geo.* 2.503f.) – though their life is otherwise far from ideal.



transcend a baser 'animal' nature is commonplace in ancient as in modern thought.<sup>96</sup> As we shall see, this view did not go unchallenged (though it remains the dominant one throughout classical antiquity); a long tradition of philosophical speculation and debate lies behind Virgil's treatment of animals in the *Georgics*.<sup>97</sup>

The idea that our animal passions and instincts bring us closer to the beasts is something of a commonplace in a variety of literary genres, from the simple beast-fable to such sophisticated works as Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.<sup>98</sup> This kind of interpretation also has a wide currency in the critical tradition, in which myths of monstrous creatures or animal metamorphoses are frequently explained as moral allegories, symbolizing surrender to or defeat of the passions.<sup>99</sup> The Circe episode in the *Odyssey*, for instance, is commonly read as a cautionary tale, warning against the brutalizing effect of greed or lust, and demonstrating the power of self-control and reason (symbolized by Hermes' gift of the mysterious herb moly).<sup>100</sup> The allegorist Heraclitus similarly interprets the labours of Heracles as a symbolic representation of the wise man's subjugation of the passions.<sup>101</sup> Here again, animals are associated specifically with licentious behaviour ungoverned by the force of reason or wisdom.

This emphasis can be connected with a second trend in ancient thought on the relationships between humans and animals, the view that the distinctively human faculties of thought, speech and memory separate us radically from the dumb and mindless beasts. Human beings are the only species to stand upright, so that we are able to look about us (and up at the stars); we alone have hands, which are essential to the development of technology. These ideas are associated particularly with Aristotle, who

<sup>96</sup> For a spirited critique of the popular (modern) concept of 'beastliness', see Midgley (1973); on the history of 'speciesism', cf. also Singer (1995), pp. 185–248.

<sup>97</sup> On the philosophical tradition, see esp. Dierauer (1977) and Sorabji (1993); there is also useful material in Long and Sedley (1987), pp. 112–24 and 346–54, and Beagon (1992), pp. 124–58. Beagon also discusses popular Roman attitudes to animals; see also Toynbee (1973), pp. 21–3.

<sup>98</sup> Lucius' transformation into an ass is symbolically appropriate as a reflection both of his lustfulness and of his inveterate curiosity; but there is also a further level of irony in the savage behaviour of other characters, who often seem much more 'bestial' than the gentle ass. See further Schlam (1992), pp. 14–17 and 99–112.

<sup>99</sup> On allegorical interpretation in general, see esp. Buffière (1956) and Pépin (1958).

<sup>100</sup> E.g. Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.7, Diogenes *ap.* Dio Chrys. 8.20–6, Hor. *Ep.* 1.2.17–31, Heraclitus, *Quaest. Hom.* 72–3, Plut. *fr.* 200. See further Kaiser (1964) and Yarnall (1994), pp. 53–98.

<sup>101</sup> *Quaest. Hom.* 33.

states explicitly that only human beings are capable of thought, memory and speech, and therefore of justice and virtue; but similar attitudes can be found earlier, in Plato, Xenophon and even the Presocratics.<sup>102</sup> The assumption that humans are superior to the beasts subsequently becomes prominent amongst Stoic writers, whose teleological and anthropocentric outlook gives rise to the notion that other animals exist specifically for our benefit.<sup>103</sup>

Set against this tradition is the position adopted by the Epicureans and Cynics, who tend to view animal behaviour as exemplary rather than inferior. For the Epicurean, animals act as 'mirrors of nature',<sup>104</sup> untainted by the false beliefs and unnecessary desires inculcated in human beings by their society; animals know instinctively that pleasure is the *summum bonum*, and are not distracted by superstitious fears and vain desires for wealth, position and honour. The Cynic position is more radical still: animals are actually superior to human beings, and should serve as models of appropriate behaviour.<sup>105</sup>

As we would expect, the Cynic–Epicurean view of the relationship between the species can be seen to underlie much of Lucretius' argumentation in the *DRN*. But the idea that the possession of reason is a crucial distinguishing feature of the human race is also present, and there is arguably some tension between these two conceptions.

The notion that animal behaviour can serve as a paradigmatic illustration of the life lived in accordance with nature, and uncontaminated by false values, can be seen most clearly in the contrasting treatments of sexual attraction in the proem to book 1 and at the conclusion of book 4. Venus in

<sup>102</sup> See esp. *H.A.* 488b 24–6; *N.E.* 1098a 3–4; *D.A.* 414b 18–19, 433a 12; *Pol.* 1253a 7–18 (speech), 1332b 5; *H.A.* 488b 24–6 (memory), *P.A.* 641b 7–9, 686a 27–31 (upright posture). For earlier views, see e.g. Alcmaeon fr. 1a D–K, Anaxag. fr. 21b D–K, Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.11–14, Plato, *Lach.* 196e–97b, *Rep.* 441a–b. Cf. Dierauer (1977), pp. 28–177 and Sorabji (1993), pp. 7–16.

<sup>103</sup> See especially Cic. *N.D.* 2.130–53, where Balbus gives a long disquisition on the perfection of the human species – seen here as superior not only in intellectual capacity but also in physical make-up – and dilates on the generosity with which god has provided for our every need. Ovid draws – with some irony – on the same tradition in *Met.* 1.76–86. Cf. also Cic. *Off.* 1.105 and Sen. *Ep.* 124.20f., and see further Dierauer (1977), pp. 199–219.

<sup>104</sup> The phrase is drawn from Cicero, *Fin.* 2.31f.; cf. 1.30, 1.71 and Epic. fr. 398 Us. Cf. also Juv. 15.159–74, where the poet ironically appeals to the view that animals are free from the taint of civilization – immediately after asserting the *superiority* of the human race over other animal species (131–58).

<sup>105</sup> See e.g. Dio Chrys. 6.22; D.L. 6.22. On Epicurean and Cynic views, see further Dierauer (1977), pp. 178–98 and Long and Sedley (1987), pp. 112–24.

the proem instils desire in the hearts of wild and domestic animals, which they obey with joyful enthusiasm; the reproductive instinct ensures the continuity of the species, and is depicted as natural and unproblematic.<sup>106</sup> By contrast, the Venus of book 4 is a tyrant who goads her victims to madness; the romantic illusions of the human lover – the desire to possess the beloved completely, refusal to see her imperfections, jealousy of possible rivals – make it impossible for him to enjoy the uncomplicated pleasure experienced by the animals of the proem. A similar subtext can be detected in Lucretius' discussion of dreams a little earlier in book 4.<sup>107</sup> Here, a catalogue of animal dreams (987–1010) is sandwiched between two lists of common human dreams (966–85 and 1011–36). Ostensibly, these examples are designed to illustrate the theory that our dreams are influenced by our daily activities; but the strong element of conflict and anxiety in the human dreams suggests that an ethical message is also implicit here. While animal dreams are not always restful, they do revolve around the patterns of flight and pursuit which are natural for the species; whereas the human nightmares of war and death described in lines 1011–23 are clearly self-inflicted. While the poet himself dreams peacefully of writing philosophy (969f.),<sup>108</sup> those whose minds are stirred by 'great motions' when awake are unable to find peace even in sleep.

At this point, we can begin to detect an ambiguity in Lucretius' presentation. Though human beings are physiologically similar to (other) animals, they have a unique potential to control and shape their own destiny. Throughout the poem, Lucretius frequently uses animal behaviour to exemplify principles which are assumed to apply equally to humans: the eagerness of horses to leave the starting gate in a chariot race, for instance, is used to illustrate the operation of free will, and Lucretius calls upon several animal examples in explaining the working of the senses in book 4.<sup>109</sup> Conversely, the reaction of the human body to effluences of various kinds helps to explain why animals are fatally affected by poisonous exhalations from *Averna loca* ('places like Avernus').<sup>110</sup> The point is made explicit in 3.296–307, where the poet is discussing the composition of the soul. He explains that characteristics such as irascibility, timidity and

<sup>106</sup> Cf also 4.1192–1207, where animal examples are significantly used to illustrate the hypothesis that sexual pleasure is mutual, not limited to the male of the species.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Cucchiarelli (1994).

<sup>108</sup> The lines recall the poet's account of his *noctes serena* ('peaceful nights') in the proem, 1.140–5.

<sup>109</sup> 2.263–5; 4.547f., 638–41, 678–83, 710–21. <sup>110</sup> 6.738–839.

placidity reflect differences in the ratio between the elements of fire, breath and air in the soul, and illustrates each quality with an appropriate animal example, the lion, deer and ox respectively. The conclusion is unequivocal: *sic hominum genus est* ('so it is with the human race', 3.307); the human character is governed by the same principles as the 'characters' of animals. And yet, while education cannot eradicate these characteristics entirely, human beings (presumably *unlike* animals) are able to modify their character, in such a way that 'nothing prevents us from living the life of the gods' (322). This sounds much more like the Aristotelian view:<sup>111</sup> human beings are distinguished from animals by the possession of reason, which can enable them to rise above the beasts and approach the level of the divine. The behaviour of animals here is no longer seen as exemplary, but as something which we should be able to transcend.

A similar ambivalence can be traced in Lucretius' history of civilization in book 5. Here, the 'mirror of nature' theory is used as the basis for reconstructing a hypothetical picture of the life of the first human beings. In his natural state, before the rise of culture, man behaves just like any other animal: he forages for food, sleeps on the ground, drinks from springs and is engaged in a constant struggle with both predators and prey.<sup>112</sup> But Lucretius does not commit himself to the view that this state was either more or less desirable than later developments. In fact, as I suggested in my discussion the 'aetiology of *labor*' at the beginning of this chapter, the poet seems concerned to debunk both primitivist and progressivist views of the rise of civilization. The gradual separation of man and animal is depicted neither as a good thing nor a bad thing; rather, it has the potential to be either.

The passage which describes the invention of language is particularly interesting, in that it once again suggests a tension between the idea that humans are animals like any other and the notion that the possession of reason is a crucial distinguishing feature. Here, language is seen both as a more sophisticated version of the different noises made by animals in different circumstances, and as something peculiar to human beings, as an innate human capacity.<sup>113</sup> Each species is instinctively aware of its peculiar

<sup>111</sup> Cf. esp. *H.A.* 488b 12–27.

<sup>112</sup> On the *more ferarum* analogy, see esp. Schiesaro (1990), pp. 122–33.

<sup>113</sup> Lucretius' reasoning here resembles the Stoic version of the 'cradle argument', which is subtly different from the usual Epicurean line: for the Stoics, the first instinct of the new-born animal is not the pursuit of pleasure, but the impulse to self-preservation and the fulfilment of its own natural capacities. See Long and Sedley (1987), pp. 346–54.

Similar sets of animal *adynata* can be found in several other parts of the poem; these can be linked with a further characteristic feature of Lucretius' treatment of animals, that is, the idea that the species are fixed and unchanging.<sup>115</sup> Although Lucretius' zoogony involves something like the modern theory of the 'survival of the fittest', there is no evolution here. Whereas the poet describes how *plants* were gradually 'tamed' in the course of the development of agriculture, it is striking that the idea of a gradual domestication of *animal* species does not seem to have occurred to him: the characters that animals possess now are the same as they always were. In fact, sheep and cattle are seen as having entered into a kind of contract with human beings: while other species have survived because of their speed, cunning or strength, domestic animals survived by committing themselves to human care:

et genus omne quod est veterino semine partum  
lanigeraeque simul pecudes et bucera saecula  
omnia sunt hominum tutelae tradita, Memmi.  
nam cupide fugere feras pacemque secuta  
sunt et larga suo sine pabula parta labore,  
quae damus utilitatis eorum praemia causa. 5.865–70

<sup>115</sup> On *adynata* and animal behaviour in both Lucretius and Virgil, see further pp. 220–7 below.

And as for all the species of draught-animal and likewise woolly flocks and the generations of horned cattle, all of these were handed over to the guardianship of men, Memmius. For they fled eagerly from beasts of prey and sought the protection and plentiful fodder, gained without any labour on their part, which we give them in return for their usefulness to us.

The dangers of attempting to domesticate animals which are naturally fierce are suggested in the discussion of the evolution of military technology later in book 5. Lucretius explains how the development of horse-riding was followed by the invention of chariots and the use of elephants in war. But subsequent attempts to train other animals – bulls, boars and lions – meet with disaster, as the beasts revert to their natural patterns of behaviour and run amok, turning on their own side and attacking men and horses indiscriminately (1308–49).

In Lucretius, then, there is a kind of dialectic between the view that animals act as ‘mirrors of nature’, showing us how we *should* behave, and the idea that we are distinguished from them by the capacity for reason. Paradoxically enough, it is this very capacity which has the potential to liberate us from the vain fears and desires which prevent us from achieving true peace of mind and living the life according to nature represented by the beasts.

A similar dialectic can be observed in the *Georgics*. On the one hand, animals are depicted in strikingly anthropomorphic terms throughout the poem: the nests or burrows of birds, mice and moles are referred to as *domus* (‘homes’) or *cubilia* (‘bedchambers’); the ant is wary of poverty in old age, and birds feel gladness at the end of a rainy spell;<sup>116</sup> the breeding of horses and cattle is described in terms of marriage, and the breaking in of the young suggests the education of human children;<sup>117</sup> and of course

<sup>116</sup> 2.209; 1.181–3; 1.186; 1.410–14.

<sup>117</sup> *Lucinam iustosque . . . hymenaeos*, ‘childbirth and lawful marriage’, 3.60; for the ‘education’ of calves, see 3.163–5 (*hortari*, ‘encourage’, and *formare*, ‘shape’, are used in this sense by Cicero (*Or.* 1.234, *Brut.* 142) and Quintilian (*Inst.* 1.pr.5, 10.1.59, 10.3.23); for *facilis* (‘easy’) used of human character or dispositions, see e.g. *Ov. Tr.* 3.5.32, *Sen. Ep.* 108.27, *Quint. Inst.* 4.2.112). Note also *iuvēnis* (‘young’, 118), *iuvēntas* (‘youth’, 63) and *vulgus* (‘common people’, 469), none of which is commonly used of animals (see *TLL* 7.2.735.5–736.75, *TLL* 7.2.742–743.67 and *OLD* s.v. *vulgus* §§ 2b and 3 respectively). On the humanization of the horse in 72–122 (where the emphasis is generally on character rather than appearance), see Gale (1991), pp. 417f. and Rocca, *E. V.* s.v. *equini*.

the beehive is seen throughout book 4 as a kind of city in miniature.<sup>118</sup> This approach culminates in the poet's lament for the dying plough-ox in 3.525–30:

quid labor aut benefacta iuvant? quid vomere terras  
invertisse gravis? atqui non Massica Bacchi  
munera, non illis epulae nocuere repostae:  
frondibus et victu pascuntur simplicis herbae,  
pocula sunt fontes liquidi atque exercita cursu  
flumina, nec somnos abruptit cura salubris.

What use now are all their toil and good deeds? What of the fact that they turned the heavy soil with the ploughshare? No harm came to them from Massic wine, the gift of Bacchus, nor from endless banquets: they fed on leaves and simple grass, their wine-cups were clear springs and rushing streams, and no anxiety disturbed their healthy sleep.

This passage strongly suggests the Cynic view, that the simple life of animals is actually preferable to the cares and unnecessary desires associated with human rationality. But it is clear elsewhere in the *Georgics* that there is a hierarchical distinction between humans and animals:<sup>119</sup> the farmer is instructed to mould and shape his livestock by selecting the best animals for breeding, and given detailed advice on how to break in young animals – or ‘enslave’ them, as the poet dramatically expresses it in 3.168. Often, the farmer's control over his animal charges is presented in very positive terms. The word *cura* (‘care’), which is used several times in book 3 for the farmer's supervision of his livestock, is suggestive of kindness and devotion, as well as the effort which must be invested in the breeding and care of animals.<sup>120</sup> The smaller animals of the second half of book 3, and the bees of book 4, are particularly reliant on their keeper for protection from bad weather, pests and disease. The breeder also ensures the perpetuation of his flocks and herds, playing a godlike role analogous

<sup>118</sup> See especially 4.149–209. The classic study of the beehive as human state is Dahlmann (1954); see also Griffin (1979), pp. 62f. (with further references at n. 9). On humanization of animals more generally, see Liebeschuetz (1965); Putnam (1979), pp. 174–201; Rocca (1983); Thomas, index s.v. ‘personification’; Gale (1991).

<sup>119</sup> The tension between anthropomorphism and hierarchical distinction is sensitively handled (in relation to the vines of book 2) by Putnam (1979), pp. 130–2; cf. also S. Rocca, *E. V. s.v. animali*, and Schäfer (1996), pp. 99–100.

<sup>120</sup> On *cura* in the *Georgics*, see ch. 5 below. For *cura* as a positive term, see Hauser (1954), pp. 1–46 (note especially pp. 21–5, on the *curae* of parenthood and friendship).

to that of Lucretius' Venus or *Natura*, who similarly 'restores one thing from the stuff of another':

mitte in Venerem pecuaria primus,  
atque *aliam ex alia* generando *suffice* prolem. *Geo.* 3.64f.

Be the first to put your animals to stud, and supply your flock by breeding one generation from another.

quando *alid ex alio reficit*<sup>121</sup> natura nec ulla  
rem gigni patitur nisi morte adiuta aliena.

*DRN* 1.263f.<sup>122</sup>

Since nature makes one thing from another and allows nothing to be born without the aid of another's death.

And he plays an important part in restraining the more violent instincts of his animals: it is the beekeeper who puts an abrupt end to the battle of the bees in 4.86f., and ensures that civil war will not break out again by killing one of the rival leaders (88–90); and in book 3, the farmer is advised to curb the aggressive behaviour prompted by *amor*, by the expedient of separating males from females and 'exiling' the males beyond the barriers of rivers or mountains (209–14). In the latter case, however, his best efforts seem doomed to failure, as becomes clear in the central digression on the power of *amor*.<sup>123</sup>

At this point, the gap between human and animal has virtually disappeared: the 'battle of the bulls' which launches the digression is highly anthropomorphic in its language,<sup>124</sup> and human beings are explicitly included in the catalogue of animals driven to extremes of wild and unnatural behaviour by the power of *amor*. Love, or sexual attraction, is

<sup>121</sup> Cf. also *refice*, 'replace', *Geo.* 3.70.      <sup>122</sup> Cf. also 1.20, 557, 562 and 3.965.

<sup>123</sup> The passage is discussed in more detail on pp. 221–3 below, and in Gale (1991), pp. 418–20. See also Liebeschuetz (1965), Miles (1975) and especially Hardie (1986), pp. 158–66.

<sup>124</sup> Notably, the passage recalls two epic similes comparing men with animals: the description of the fight in 220–3 recalls Ap. Rhod. 2.88f., and Virgil himself was to use an expanded version of the lines as a simile describing the duel between Aeneas and Turnus in *Aen.* 12.715–24 (see Hunter (1989)); similarly, the storm simile in 237–41 is drawn from a Homeric description of men marching into battle (*Il.* 4.422–6). The behaviour of the defeated bull also recalls Lucretius' account of early man, who lived *more ferarum* ('like wild beasts'): cf. esp. *instrato saxa cubili* ('on a bed of bare rock') with Lucretius' *instrata cubilia fronde* ('beds spread with leaves', 5.987; cf. 970–2) and *frondibus hirsutis et carice pastus acuta* ('feeding on rough leaves and prickly sedge') with Lucretius' description of early man's *pabula dura* ('rough fodder', 5.939–44). The distinction between human and animal is thus further eroded: Virgil's bulls not only behave like human beings, but like human beings who are behaving like animals.



'the same' for 'men and wild beasts and the tribes of fish, flocks and painted birds' (242f.); the mad folly of the human youth, Leander, mirrors that of the frenzied horses which will swim across raging torrents and cannot be restrained even by savage blows once they have caught the scent of the female.<sup>125</sup> The notion of human superiority to the animals breaks down here. It is not, this time, that animals are admirable or exemplary, but that human beings are fundamentally animalistic at heart, sharing the violent drives and instincts of the beasts. The passage sheds doubt on the idea that we are able to control even ourselves, despite our possession of reason. Virgil presents a strong challenge here to Lucretius' faith in the power of *ratio*. The digression is full of echoes of both the invocation to Venus and the attack on romantic love in the finale to *DRN* 4.<sup>126</sup> Like Lucretius' animals, Virgil's horses are undeterred by the barriers of rivers or mountains. But the charms of Venus have been replaced by a fiery madness much more akin to the frenzy of the deluded human lover of book 4. Where, for Lucretius, the madness of love can be cured by reason, and by emulating the uncomplicated sexual instincts of animals, Virgil suggests that reason may fail in the face of those very instincts, which we must strive at all costs to suppress.

It is notable that the animal worst affected by the flames of *amor* is the horse (266), which stands throughout the book as an emblem of passion

<sup>125</sup> Leander's anonymity both gives him a paradigmatic status (he stands for *all* human youths) and further weakens the distinction between human and animal (the 'young man' is simply another species in the catalogue, along with lions, bears, boars etc.). As Putnam points out ((1979), p. 199), the anaphora *quid iuvenis* . . . *quid lynxes* ('what of the young man . . . ? what of lynxes?', 258, 264) also underlines the similarity between the human lover and the other animals.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. esp. *flumina correptosque* . . . *montis* ('rivers whirling mountainous boulders', 254) and *superant montis et flumina tranant* ('they cross mountains and swim rivers', 270) with *rapidos tranant amnis* ('they swim rushing rivers', *DRN* 1.15) and *montis fluviosque rapaces* ('mountains and whirling rivers', 1.17); *illas ducit amor* ('love leads them', 3.269) with *quo quaque inducere pergis* ('wherever you proceed to lead them', *DRN* 1.16); *hominumque ferarumque* ('men and beasts', 242) with *hominum divumque voluptas* ('pleasure of men and gods', *DRN* 1.1); *omne adeo genus* ('so every species', 242) with *genus omne animantum* ('every species of living thing', *DRN* 1.4); and *amor omnibus idem* ('love is the same for all', 244) with *omnibus incutiens* . . . *amorem* ('wounding all of them with love', *DRN* 1.19). Love is a madness in *DRN* 4.1069 and 1117, a fire in 1077, 1086, 1090, 1098, 1116 and 1138; cf. also *caeci stimulos* . . . *amoris* ('the goads of blind love', 210) with *DRN* 4.1120, 1153 (*caecus*), 1082 and 1215 (*stimuli*); *urit* . . . *videndo* ('inflames with her appearance', 215) with *DRN* 4.1102; and *dulcibus* . . . *inlecebris* ('sweet snare', 217) with 1059, 1062 and 1145. Hardie (1986), p. 164, argues persuasively that the etymological play *hippomanes/furor equarum* (literally, 'horse-madness') in 266/280 recalls Lucretius' more obvious pun on *amor* ('love') and *umor* ('liquid') in *DRN* 4.1056–8.

and violence barely held in check.<sup>127</sup> From the outset, horses are portrayed as fiery, excitable creatures, whose wilder side (like that of Lucretius' 'beasts of battle') threatens always to re-emerge. The ideal stallion described in 72–94 is not only bold and fearless, but also a natural warrior;<sup>128</sup> it snorts as though breathing fire (85), like the bulls of Aeetes or the monstrous horses of Diomedes.<sup>129</sup> The paragraph closes with a list of *exempla*, which become progressively more threatening: Cyllarus is safely 'tamed by the reins of Pollux', but the horses of Mars and Achilles have ill-omened associations,<sup>130</sup> while Saturn's metamorphosis into a horse looks back to the Centauromachy at the end of book 2, and might similarly be seen as a symbol of the brutalizing force of passion.<sup>131</sup>

In the next paragraph, where the poet considers the best age for breeding, horses are once again associated with fire (95–100, 119). The fieriness of their character foreshadows the later attack on the fiery madness of *amor*, but is also seen here as something useful, even essential, to the breeder. Here one of the central dilemmas of the *Georgics* comes into sharp focus: passions such as courage and aggression lie at the root of human violence, disorder, civil war; but they are also crucial to the farmer and the politician. The suppression of passion is both necessary and impossible.<sup>132</sup>

The description of the chariot-race in 103–12 takes these hints a stage further by linking the horse with the warrior and poet as depicted

<sup>127</sup> Cf. Liebeschuetz (1965); Ross (1987), pp. 149–57. Liebeschuetz notes that the horse is also associated with passion (both martial and sexual) and destructive rage in the *Aeneid*: Turnus, pleased to be returning to battle after his abortive debate with Drances, is compared to a horse which has escaped from its stable and heads for a flock of mares (like the horse of *Geo.* 3.250–4); he is also cheered by the sight of his champing horses in 12.82. Horses are further associated with war in *Aen.* 1.444 and 3.539f.

<sup>128</sup> On the links between horses and war in *Geo.* 3, see pp. 261–3 below.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. *Geo.* 2.140 with *DRN* 5.30, and see further pp. 139–40 below.

<sup>130</sup> For the horses of Ares/Mars, Δεῖμος and Φόβος ('Terror' and 'Fear'), see *Il.* 15.119f. and cf. also *Aen.* 12.331–40, where the bloody rampage of Turnus is compared to the progress of *sanguineus Mavors* ('bloody Mars') with his 'frenzied horses'; we might think, too, of Mars in the finale to *Geo.* 1. Achilles' divine horses figure in *Il.* 16.148–54 (in the build-up to the death of Patroclus) and 19.392–418 (where they prophesy Achilles' death).

<sup>131</sup> The offspring of the union between Saturn and Philyra was the centaur Chiron (note the patronymic in 3.550). Like the horse itself, Chiron is a highly ambiguous figure, associated both with the victims of Bacchus in 2.454–7 and with the art of medicine in 550; cf. Kirk (1970), pp. 152–62. On the metamorphosis, see further pp. 125–6 below.

<sup>132</sup> The inseparability of courage and aggression is also one of the crucial issues in heroic epic, particularly in the *Aeneid*: in this sense, the *Georgics* can be seen to anticipate the central themes of the later poem. See further pp. 252–69 below, where this theme is explored more fully.

elsewhere in the poem, and by continuing to blur the boundaries between human and animal. The horse's desire for victory and glory (102, 112) looks back to the proem to the book, where the poet's dreams of glory were linked with the victories of the *princeps*. Virgil imagines himself, like the race-horses, as winning *palmae* ('palms', 12) and victory (9);<sup>133</sup> Octavian appears as a victor both here and in the *sphragis* (4.561), and traces his ancestry back to Troy and Jupiter (34–6) just as the proud stallion looks back to Epirus, Mycenae and Neptune (121f.). The description of the race is immediately followed by the aetiology of chariots and reins; thus, the passage as a whole can be connected with the theme of the poet's dilemma between passion and restraint which we explored in the last chapter.<sup>134</sup> At the same time, the emotions of horses and riders rapidly merge: we begin with the horse's desire for victory (102), and then turn to the charioteers – though *iuvenum* ('youths') in 105 is momentarily ambiguous, in a context where the horse's age is under discussion.<sup>135</sup> The phrases *amor laudum* ('love of praise') and *victoria curae* ('eager for victory') in 112 might equally well refer to either, or both. So, too, the Lapiths are described as training the rider, rather than the horse (116).<sup>136</sup> This merging of horse and rider again suggests the Centaurs; but by introducing the Lapiths, instead, as *heuretai*, the poet keeps in play the possibility that the 'animal instincts' (of both horse and human) might be subject to restraint. Throughout the book (and the poem), success and failure are finely balanced.

These themes continue to be prominent in the next section, which deals with training. Here the farmer seems very much in control; nevertheless, the simile in 196–201, where the fully-trained horse is compared to the north wind, continues to hint at the presence of destructive instincts barely suppressed, and this section ends with a reference to the creature's high spirits and a warning that it will reject the bit and the whip

<sup>133</sup> Cf. also *tenuis non gloria* ('no small glory', 4.6) and the references to *amor, laudes* ('praise') and *honos* ('honour') in the second proem (3.284–94). Lundström (1976), p. 181, also compares *temptanda via est*, 'I must find [lit. try] a way', 3.8 with *primus et ire viam et fluvios temptare*, 'he leads the way and braves [lit. tries] rivers', in 77.

<sup>134</sup> See also pp. 188–92 below.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. *aevum* ('age', 100) and *iuvenem* ('young', 118), which both refer to the horse, though the latter is much more commonly applied to human beings (cf. n. 117 above). It is also worth comparing Virgil's two models, *DRN* 2.263–5 (recalled especially by *nonne vides* ('don't you see?') and the reference to *carceres* ('starting-gates') in 103f.), where the horse is used as an *exemplum* in a discussion of human free will; and *Il.* 23.362–72, which Virgil follows fairly closely, while laying much greater stress on the emotions of both horses and charioteers.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. Thomas and Mynors *ad loc.*

if not carefully prepared (207f.).<sup>137</sup> This note of apprehension leads into the attack on *amor*, where the horse's capacity for destructiveness is fully revealed. True to its fiery nature, it is overwhelmed by the flames of *amor*, and breaks away from all human restraint (250–4). Not only do mares in heat produce a substance, *hippomanes*, which is used as a poison by wicked stepmothers (280–3), but their madness is traced back to a supremely unnatural and violent act: deprived of the chance to mate, Glaucus' chariot horses turned upon and devoured their trainer (266–8).

This last act of violence is picked up in the finale, where the sick horse is treated with wine in an attempt to restore its failing spirits. The remedy – like the flame of *amor* – acts on the animal's innate fieriness, as it 'blazes up in frenzy' (511f.). This time its destructive passion is turned not on its owner but on itself, as it 'tears with bared teeth at its own lacerated limbs' (514).

Again, the association of horses with wine and violence takes us back to the Centauromachy at the end of the previous book.<sup>138</sup> Like the vine in book 2, the horse in book 3 hints at the fragility of civilization and the difficulty of repressing the passions. Virgil plays up the tension which we observed in Lucretius between the notions of human superiority to the beasts and of the essential similarity between humans and animals. In Lucretius' world-view, animals and human beings are closely related, but humans are crucially distinguished from other species by the possession of reason. To some extent, the same is true in Virgil, but the boundaries are much more tenuous and easily transgressed. Virgil constantly challenges both Lucretius' confidence in the power of reason and the Epicurean notion that the natural life is necessarily the most desirable: our animalistic side represents, for Virgil, the darker and more dangerous aspect of human nature, but at the same time it is an essential part of our make-up, which reason – like the charioteer in the closing simile of book 1 – may ultimately prove unable to control.

<sup>137</sup> With *ingentis tollent animos* ('they will show their high spirits'), cf. the references in 81, 100 and 119 to *animus* as a desirable quality; again, the farmer faces a dilemma between suppression and encouragement of the animals' high spirits.

<sup>138</sup> Dion (1993), pp. 396–8 notes that the effects of wine and *amor* are parallel: both are associated with *furor* (2.455–7, 3.511–14; 3.100, 242–6, 266–8), and both result in death, especially death by dismemberment (Dion compares the deaths of Glaucus in 267f. and the horses themselves in 514 with the death of Orpheus at the hands of the Bacchantes in book 4). On the link between wine and *furor* in the *Aeneid*, see also Griffin (1995) and Maggiali (*E.V. s.v. vite*).

*Cura*, cruelty and sacrifice

I mentioned earlier that the relationship between the farmer and his livestock was portrayed by Lucretius as a kind of 'social contract': beasts of burden, sheep and cattle commit themselves to human care in return for 'plentiful fodder gained without any labour on their part' (5.869). Lucretius could be taxed with a certain disingenuousness in this passage: the bargain does not seem quite as fair as he implies. It might be objected that cattle and beasts of burden do indeed work for their meals, and the poet omits to mention the fact that cattle and sheep were likely to be destined ultimately for the table or the altar.

The notion of a partnership between the farmer and his animals becomes still more problematic in Virgil's version. Again, anthropomorphism tends to narrow the gap between humans and animals, particularly in book 1, where the plough-ox acts almost as an equal partner sharing in the farmer's labours. The ox 'groans' as it pulls the heavy plough, and the efforts of men and oxen alike are threatened by the dangers of pests, weeds, shade and bad weather; alternatively, the ploughman is like the general of an army, 'exercising' his 'sturdy' troops (1.46; 118 and 325; 210; 65).<sup>139</sup> In the finale to book 2, oxen are described as 'well-deserving' and are placed almost on a par with the farmer's family as objects of his care:

hinc anni labor, hinc patriam parvosque nepotes  
sustinet, hinc armenta boum meritosque iuvencos.

2.514f.

This is his annual labour, and thus he sustains his homeland and his little grandsons, his herds of cattle and his well-deserving oxen.

In book 3, horses, cattle, sheep and goats are frequently objects of the farmer's *cura*.<sup>140</sup> And yet the farmer must sometimes treat these same animals with considerable harshness. He is to have no pity for an old or

<sup>139</sup> Cf. also 2.357 (where the oxen are again portrayed as sharing in the labour of viticulture) and 3.50 (where they are *fortis ad aratra*, 'sturdy at the plough'). In 1.330f. animals and human beings are united in their fear of the storm; while in 2.470 *mugitus boum* ('lowing of cattle') contributes to the charm of the countryside.

<sup>140</sup> See especially 3.123–56, where *cura* is lavished first on the males, then the females at breeding time (and note the miniature *locus amoenus* in 143–5), and 295–321 on the need to protect the *molle pecus* ('tender flock') from cold and hunger in winter; *cura* . . . *tuendae* ('to be watched over with care') in 305 is picked up by *curae* ('care') in 319.

imperfect breeding animal, and infected animals must be bled or even slaughtered to save the rest of the flock; I have already mentioned the 'enslavement' of young calves.<sup>141</sup> The realistic and unsentimental tone of this advice recalls Cato's infamous recommendation: *boves vetulos, armenta dellicula, oves delliculas* . . . *servum senem, servum morbosum et siquid aliut supersit, vendat* ('[the farmer] should sell old oxen, blemished cattle, blemished sheep . . . an old slave, a sickly slave and anything else superfluous').<sup>142</sup> But whereas Cato regards even the human slave simply as a piece of equipment, Virgil emphasizes the close bond between human and animal, who are united by their common subjection to age, disease<sup>143</sup> and death: *optima quaeque dies miseris mortalibus aevi | prima fugit* . . . ('the best days of our lives are the first to fly by for wretched mortal creatures', 3.66f.). The juxtaposition between these two perspectives is startling; the same effect is achieved elsewhere – where child-like calves are 'enslaved' (168), where a sick individual must be slaughtered to save the 'people' (*vulgus*, 469),<sup>144</sup> and, most remarkably, in a series of passages which refer to animal sacrifice.

We have come full circle to the subject of religion, with which we began. I have already suggested that certain passages in the poem hint at a degree of scepticism as to the validity of cult practice,<sup>145</sup> while others

<sup>141</sup> 3.95–100 and 387–90 (rejection of old or imperfect animals), 457–69 (no mercy for sick animals), 167–8 ('enslavement' of young calves). Cf. also 2.207–11 (the 'ancient homes' of birds destroyed to make way from new plough-land), and the dialectic between protection and harshness in book 4 (the bees require delicate and careful treatment to protect them against pests and cold weather, 8–50 and 239–42, but must be handled with unsympathetic harshness to prevent battles and swarms, 86–115).

<sup>142</sup> *Agr.* 2.7. <sup>143</sup> Cf. 4.251f.: the bees are subject to disease just as we are.

<sup>144</sup> On the anthropomorphic vocabulary in these two passages, see n. 117 above. The parallel between training of young animals and education of children is fairly common, though Virgil has reversed the usual direction of the comparison (cf. Xen. *Oec.* 13.6–9; Plato, *Rep.* 413d; Philod. *Peri Parrhesias*, fr. 87; Hor. *Ep.* 1.2.62–7); but the language used by other writers is naturally much less harsh than in the Virgilian passage. Note also the emphasis on *cura* in 174–8, immediately following the account of the calves' 'enslavement'; and the reference to the barbaric northerners in 461–3, which tends to associate the farmer with the ferocious Scythians of 349–83. Cf. also 4.106–15, where the beekeeper's sedulous care in picking flowers for his bees with his own hand is juxtaposed with the blunt advice, *tu regibus alas | eripe* ('tear the wings off the king-bees', 106f.).

<sup>145</sup> It is important to bear in mind that intellectual scepticism is not usually felt to be inconsistent with a belief in the importance of cult-practice. Whatever one's personal opinions about the nature of the gods and their accessibility to prayer and sacrifice, religious ritual might still be valued for a number of reasons – as a source of inspiration or historical continuity or social cohesion. See further Liebeschuetz (1979), pp. 1–54; Scheid (1985), pp. 104–16; Feeney (1998), pp. 12–46.

explicitly recommend prayer and sacrifice as crucially important if the farmer is to succeed in producing a plentiful harvest. In the case of animal sacrifice, the issue is further complicated both by the tension I have been tracing between kinship and harsh treatment, and by the existence of a long tradition in ancient thought of rejecting both ritual slaughter and meat-eating.<sup>146</sup> Philosophers from Pythagoras to Porphyry advocate vegetarianism, usually on the grounds that humans and animals are akin, or that the human soul may actually be reincarnated in an animal body.<sup>147</sup> Theophrastus<sup>148</sup> argues at length that killing animals – our near relatives – is unjust and could not possibly be pleasing to the gods. Empedocles warns his reader against the ‘cruel deed of eating flesh’, which he regards with abhorrence as the ultimate pollution (fr. 139 D–K). In another fragment (128), he looks back to a golden age when only Aphrodite was worshipped, and her devotees offered only meatless sacrifices of honey and incense. Empedocles also shares with Pythagoras the belief that the human soul may be reincarnated in the body of an animal; this is regarded as another reason for abstention from animal flesh, and the idea is memorably illustrated in a fragment which depicts a father unknowingly sacrificing an animal which now embodies the soul of his own dead son:

μορφὴν δ' ἀλλάξαντα πατὴρ φίλον υἱὸν αἰέρας  
σφάζει ἐπευχόμενος μέγα νήπιος † οἱ δὲ πορεύνται †  
λίσσόμενον θύοντες ὁ δ' αὖ νήκουστος ὁμοκλέων  
σφάξας ἐν μεγάροισι κακὴν ἀλεγύνατο δαῖτα.  
ὥς δ' αὖτως πατέρ' υἱὸς ἐλὼν καὶ μητέρα παῖδες  
θυμὸν ἀπορραίσαντε φίλας κατὰ σάρκας ἔδουσιν.

fr. 137 D–K<sup>149</sup>

The father will lift up his dear son in changed form and cut his throat, the great fool, while he prays. The attendants bring on the pleading victim; but the father is deaf to its cries and, having carried out the sacrifice, prepares an evil feast in his hall. In the same way the son seizes his father and children their mother, and having bereft her of life they gobble down her dear flesh.

<sup>146</sup> See Sorabji (1993), pp. 170–5.

<sup>147</sup> For Pythagoras, see e.g. Iambl. *Vita Pyth* 24.108, D.L. 8.36, Plut. *Esu Carn.* 997e, Sext. Emp. *Adv. Math.* 9.127–30. In the four volumes of the *De Abstinencia*, Porphyry argues extensively against meat-eating.

<sup>148</sup> Ap. Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.5–32.

<sup>149</sup> The text of v. 2 is problematic; see Wright (1981), *ad loc.* (Diels' conjecture, ὁ δ' αὖ νήκουστος, is accepted by most editors for Sextus' ὁ δ' ἀνήκουστος in v. 3).

Empedocles' horrified rejection of animal sacrifice seems to have made a deep impression on Lucretius. Epicurus himself has a surprisingly conservative attitude towards traditional cult practice, despite his insistence that the gods 'are neither won by virtuous service nor touched by anger' (*DRN* 1.49 = 2.651): in fact, he recommends participation in religious festivals, on the grounds that the gods (if approached in the correct frame of mind) provide us with an inspiring example of perfect peace and tranquillity, even if they do not respond directly to prayer or worship.<sup>150</sup> In this respect, Lucretius seems closer to his poetic model Empedocles. Though he does not explicitly attack the practice of animal sacrifice, there are several passages in the *DRN* which suggest a more critical attitude than that of Epicurus.<sup>151</sup> The best known is the moving account of the sacrifice of Iphigenia in the proem to book 1, which concludes with the famous line *tantum religio potuit suadere malorum* ('such terrible crimes has religion inspired', 1.101). Of course, in this case the victim is human, and much of the horror of the passage comes from the fact that she is being treated as an animal. But it seems likely that it should nevertheless be regarded as a kind of nod to Empedocles.<sup>152</sup> In both the Lucretian passage and the Empedoclean fragment I have just quoted, a father is sacrificing his child. The larger context is also Empedoclean: Lucretius' proem as a whole contains a number of allusions, and it has even been argued that the first 150 lines are structured as a close imitation of the beginning of Empedocles' *On Nature*.<sup>153</sup> This opening hint is reinforced in the second book by a lengthy and very sympathetic descrip-

<sup>150</sup> D.L. 10.120, Epic. fr. 387 Us., *Ep. Men.* 123f., Cic. *N.D.* 1.49; cf. also Philod. *Piet.* 1.765–72 Obbink, Diog. Oen. fr. 19 cols. II.12–III.14 Smith. On Epicurus' views on cult practice, see further Festugière (1955), pp. 51–72, Rist (1972), pp. 156–63.

<sup>151</sup> Cf. Summers (1995), with brief comments on sacrifice, p. 42.

<sup>152</sup> Cf. Furley (1970), p. 62. The issue is further complicated by probable echoes of the Empedoclean fragment in Aeschylus' account of Iphigenia's sacrifice at *Ag.* 224–47. Cf. Wright (1981), *ad loc.* and, for a general discussion of the relationship between Aeschylus and Empedocles, Rösler (1970), pp. 50–5. Aeschylus' sacrifice resembles Empedocles' in several details, not all of which can be attributed to the norms of sacrificial ritual: both begin by stressing the relationship between sacrificer and victim (*Ag.* 224f., ἔτλα δ' οὖν θυτήρ γενέ- | σθαι θυγατρός, 'so he hardened his heart to become the sacrificer of his own daughter'); both lay emphasis on the father's deafness to the victim's pleas (*Ag.* 228–30, λιτός δὲ καὶ κληδόνας πατρώους | παρ' οὐδὲν . . . | ἔθεντο, 'they thought nothing of her pleas and cries of "father"'); in Aeschylus' version her mouth is subsequently stopped, so that she becomes dumb like the animal victim in Empedocles (Lucretius' Iphigenia, on the other hand, is *muta metu*, 'dumb with fear', 92)); and both describe how the victim is lifted above the altar (*Ag.* 232–5).

<sup>153</sup> Sedley (1989).



tion of a cow searching for her lost calf (2.352–66). Ostensibly, these lines are introduced purely by way of illustration: the fact that the cow is able to identify her own calf amongst many exemplifies the infinite variety to be found even in members of the same species. But the passage begins with an apparently gratuitous detail: the calf is missing because it has just been sacrificed:

nam saepe ante deum vitulus delubra decora  
turicremas propter mactatus concidit aras  
sanguinis exspirans calidum de pectore flumen. 2.352–4

For often a calf, sacrificed at the incense-smoking altars, has fallen before the splendid shrines of the gods, breathing out a hot stream of blood from its breast.

The poignant description of the cow's grief which follows seems designed to point an implicit moral: animal sacrifice is wantonly cruel.<sup>154</sup> It is also pointless: as the poet makes clear in a vehement denunciation of conventional cult practice in 5.1198–1203, piety does not consist in grovelling before statues of the gods or in making endless vows or 'spray[ing] altars with the blood of cattle'; true religion is rather 'to observe all things with a mind at peace'.<sup>155</sup> In all these instances, Lucretius seems to go further than Epicurus himself, expressing a notable sympathy with the victims of sacrifice. Though he does not accept the doctrinal foundations of Empedocles' condemnation of meat-eating, the passages I have quoted convey something of the same sense of horror at the shedding of innocent blood.

How, then, does this tradition impinge on the *Georgics*? I have already noted the disconcerting effect of anthropomorphizing language when juxtaposed with references to harsh treatment of animals. In several instances, sacrifice is mentioned in close proximity to passages where animals are humanized or where the farmer has been described as 'caring for' his livestock. The anthropomorphizing lines on the 'education' of calves, for example, come immediately after a list of uses for which cattle may be reared – including sacrifice (3.160). Similarly, in 2.194–6, a brief description of a scene of sacrifice, culminating in a vivid reference to 'steaming entrails', is immediately followed by advice to the farmer who

<sup>154</sup> Cf. Segal (1970a).

<sup>155</sup> Cf. also 4.1236–8, where Lucretius condemns sacrifices performed by childless husbands, who 'weary the gods and their oracles in vain (*nequiquam*)'.

'prefers to *care for* (*tuen*)<sup>156</sup> herds of cattle'. The most striking example, however, falls at the very centre of the poem: the cattle which in 2.515 were the farmer's trusty protégés (*meritos* . . . *iuuencos*, 'well-deserving oxen') have become in the proem to book 3 sacrificial victims, whose death gives pleasure to the onlooker (*iuuat caesos* . . . *videre iuuencos*, 'it is pleasant to see cattle slaughtered', 3.23).<sup>157</sup>

The sense of unease which surrounds references to animal sacrifice increases as the poem goes on. In the first book, it seems entirely unproblematic. The precept in *primis venerare deos* ('above all worship the gods', 1.338) is followed by an idyllic description of a spring festival.<sup>158</sup> This is the most pleasant time of year, when 'lambs are fat, and wines most mellow'. To these Hesiodic details,<sup>159</sup> Virgil adds sweet sleep and deep shade; in effect, this is the *locus amoenus* of pastoral poetry. In this idealized setting, 'rustic youths' offer not only wine and milk but also an unspecified animal to Ceres. The victim is given the epithet *felix* ('auspicious'), and is described not as 'being led', but as 'going around the young crops' (*circum* . . . *eat hostia fruges*, 345), as though acting of its own free will.

The Ceres festival in book 1 is balanced in the second book by the festival of Bacchus, at which a goat is sacrificed. I have already mentioned the aetiological aspect of the passage: the goat is connected etymologically with the origins of tragedy. But on a more explicit level, the digression is introduced as an action for the sacrifice itself. The goat is sacrificed to Bacchus as a punishment, because its bite is deadly to Bacchus' favoured plant, the vine. The same explanation is given by a number of ancient authors,<sup>160</sup> and is not remarkable in itself; but it already suggests a less straightforward attitude to sacrifice than the cheerful

<sup>156</sup> Though not unusual as a term for the rearing of livestock (see e.g. Varro, *R.R.* 2.3.6, Col. 2.16.1, 6.3.3, 7.12.1), *tueor* more often has the sense 'to keep (living creatures, etc.) safe from physical danger, protect, watch over' (*OLD* s.v. §2): see e.g. *Geo.* 1.21 (of the gods), Cic. *Fin.* 5.26, *Tusc.* 3.1, Hor. *Carm. Saec.* 14 and esp. Ov. *Met.* 15.116f. (Pythagoras' attack on meat-eating, discussed below).

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Dyson (1996).

<sup>158</sup> It is difficult to identify the festival more precisely: see Mynors *ad* 338. The ritual details do not fit precisely with either the spring or harvest offerings (to Jupiter and Ceres respectively, *Agr.* 131f. and 134), or the *lustratio agri* ('purification of the fields', 141) prescribed by Cato. Virgil seems rather to have created a composite picture of joyful rustic celebration: cf. Tib. 1.1.11–24 and 2.1.1–24; Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.139–46 and *Carm.* 3.18.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. *Op.* 585. The appeal of the Hesiodic scene is tempered by the references to scorching heat and troublesome women in the following lines.

<sup>160</sup> For references, see Mynors *ad loc.*

acceptance of book 1. The 'guilty' goat is a criminal deserving punishment, rather than the willing victim of the Ceres festival.

The issue is further complicated at the end of the book, where, as we have seen, the plough-ox is portrayed as the farmer's partner in his labours, the faithful servant who deserves a just reward. This time, the rustic festival does not explicitly include a sacrifice, but the jarring reference to *caesis iuveni* ('slaughtered cattle') is only temporarily postponed till the proem to book 3; and the closing lines of the finale tend to play up the clash between these two sentiments, rather than to smooth it over. Virgil compares the life of the contemporary farmer to that once lived by Romulus and Remus and, even longer ago, by the men of the Golden Age:

ante etiam sceptrum Dictaei regis et ante  
impia quam caesis gens est epulata iuvenis,  
aureus hanc vitam in terris Saturnus agebat.      2.536–8

Before the reign of the Cretan king [sc. Jupiter], too, and before ever  
an impious race feasted on slaughtered cattle, golden Saturn led such  
a life on earth.

Here, the unease which was implicit earlier in the book comes to the surface. The idea that animal sacrifice<sup>161</sup> is the very opposite of pious worship recalls the sentiments of Empedocles and Lucretius, and clashes dramatically with the Hesiodic piety of book 1.

This reading of Virgil's complex attitude towards sacrifice has interesting parallels in two passages of Ovid, a discussion of the origins of animal sacrifice in *Fasti* 1.337–456, and Pythagoras' vehement attack on

<sup>161</sup> The verb *epulari* ('to feast') does not necessarily imply sacrifice; but the references to bulls as sacrificial victims elsewhere in the poem (2.146f., 3.160 and especially 3.23, where the phrasing is identical) encourage the reader to draw this conclusion. For *epulor/epulae* in sacrificial contexts, cf. *Aen.* 3.224, 5.63, 7.175 and 8.283, and see also G. Cupaiuolo, *E. V.* s.v. *epulor*. In the Aratean model (*Phaen.* 132, πρῶτοι δὲ βοῶν ἐπάσαντ' ἄροτῆρων, 'they first tasted the flesh of plough-oxen'), sacrifice as such is less of an issue. The scholiast explains that 'the ancients' sacrificed only unbroken animals (cf. Cic. *Aratea* 18.3, with Barchiesi (1981)); other sources (Aelian, *Var.* 5.14.2, Cic. *N.D.* 2.159, Varro, *R.R.* 2.5.4, Ov. *Fast.* 4.413–16, Col. 6.praef.7, Pliny, *N.H.* 8.180) report a taboo on the sacrifice or merely the killing of plough-oxen. This reported prohibition does not necessarily indicate anxiety about animal sacrifice in general (though see D.L. 8.20 and Iambl. *Vita Pyth.* 120 for Pythagorean attitudes). Virgil, however, broadens the focus, by (i) juxtaposition with the reference to sacrifice in the proem to book 3; and (ii) by translating Aratus' βοῶν ἐπάσαντ' ἄροτῆρων with a phrase which might readily be taken to apply to sacrifice, and which does not specify the victims as plough-oxen.

meat-eating in *Metamorphoses* 15. Both passages contain clear echoes of the *Georgics*,<sup>162</sup> and Ovid can be seen as making more explicit the tensions which I have been tracing in Virgil.<sup>163</sup> Pythagoras mentions the absence of animal sacrifice in the Golden Age, and the goat's supposed 'crime', but asks how innocent sheep and hard-working plough-oxen can have deserved to die:

quid meruistis oves, placidum pecus inque tuendos  
 natum homines, pleno quae fertis in ubere nectar,  
 mollia quae nobis vestras velamina lanas  
 praebetis vitaeque magis quam morte iuvatis?  
 quid meruere boves,<sup>164</sup> animal sine fraude dolisque,  
 innocuum, simplex, natum tolerare labores? 15.116–21<sup>165</sup>

How have you sheep deserved this, you peaceable flock, born for  
 human comfort, whose udders are full of nectar, who provide us  
 with soft clothing from your wool and help us more by your lives

<sup>162</sup> The *Fasti* passage is a kind of microcosm of the *Georgics* as a whole: Ovid begins with the Golden Age, which ends with Ceres' introduction of sacrifice (as Virgil's ends with her introduction of agriculture: *prima Ceres*, 'Ceres first', *Fast.* 1.349 ~ *prima Ceres*, 'Ceres first', *Geo.* 1.147); this is followed by the action for the sacrifice of the goat (353–60 ~ *Geo.* 2.380–96; cf. esp. *culpa*, 'crime', 361 with *culpam*, 'crime', *Geo.* 2.380 and *stabis ad aram*, 'you stand at the altar', 357 with *stabit . . . ad aram*, 'it will stand at the altar', *Geo.* 2.395), and a faithful summary (363–80) of Virgil's Aristaeus story (except that Ovid makes Aristaeus the *heuretes* of the sacrifice of cattle generally, not just of the *bougonia*). (We should note, in this context, that the Aristaeus story is almost certainly Virgil's invention; there can be no question here of a common source. Cf. Thomas *ad* 315–32 and Bömer (1958) *ad Fast.* 1.363; for a collection of earlier material relating to Aristaeus, see, conveniently, Lee (1996), pp. 14–17.) *Met.* 15.110–42 is also a patchwork of Virgilian reminiscences: the goat-sacrifice (114f.) ~ *Geo.* 2.379–81 (*vite . . . morsa*, 'having gnawed the vine' ~ *admorsu . . . in stirpe*, 'on its gnawed stem'; *caper . . . Bacchi mactatus ad aras*, 'the goat was sacrificed at the altar of Bacchus' ~ *Baccho caper omnibus aris | caeditur*, 'a goat is sacrificed to Bacchus at every altar'; *nocuit sua culpa* 'their own crime was their downfall' ~ *non aliam ob culpam*, 'for no other crime'); on the eulogy of sheep and goats in 116–21 and the sacrificial scene in 130–5, see below. Fantham (1992), p. 48, notes that this whole section of the speech is framed by allusions to *Geo.* 2.537: *salva pietate*, 'without impiety', 109 ~ *impia*, 'impious'; *epulanda*, 'to be feasted on', 110 ~ *epulata*, 'feasted on'; *boum . . . caesorum*, 'slaughtered bulls', 141 ~ *caesis . . . iuvenis*, 'slaughtered cattle'.

<sup>163</sup> For a rather different reading, see Fantham (1992), pp. 46–9 (Fantham leaves open the question of whether Ovid is 'taking moral issue' with Virgil or merely amplifying hints which are already present in the *Georgics*).

<sup>164</sup> Cf. *meritos iuvenos*, 'well-deserving oxen', *Geo.* 2.515. The clash between this line and the sacrificial scene in the poem to *Geo.* 3 is amplified by Ovid in the lines immediately following the passage quoted: Pythagoras depicts the heartless countryman as sacrificing the very bull that he has just unyoked.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. *Geo.* 3.295–321 for the sheep (esp. *molle pecus*, 'tender flock', 299, *tuendae*, 'to be watched over', 305, *velamina*, 'clothing', 313, *gravido . . . ubere*, 'their full udders', 317) and 3.525–30 for the ox.

than by your death? How have oxen deserved it, animals free from guile and deceit, harmless, simple and born to endure labour?

Ovid also includes a description of a sacrifice (130–5) which recalls Lucretius' sacrifice of Iphigenia and its Empedoclean model.<sup>166</sup> The *Fasti* passage, on the other hand, attempts to account for the sacrifice of various kinds of animal (in addition to the goat) on the grounds of a series of original sins. But even here, there is a clear strand of pity for the victims, pulling against the notion of just deserts. The section dealing with sheep and cattle is framed by rhetorical questions, asking how peaceful sheep and hard-working oxen can have deserved death (362, 383f.), and the action for the sacrifice of birds is preceded by a couplet (441f.) in which they are referred to as delightful and harmless creatures. Taken together, the two passages act as a kind of commentary on the Virgilian model: Ovid seems to suggest that the theory of crime and punishment is inadequate as a justification for the killing of man's partners in labour, and his Pythagoras plays up the element of sympathy for the victim in order to condemn the practice altogether.

In *Georgics* 1, then, sacrifice is positively recommended; in book 2, it becomes more problematic. In book 3 further doubt is shed on its validity, as I suggested earlier. The plague itself makes even the attempt to placate the gods impossible, as animals die before they can be sacrificed. But the air of uncertainty here is increased still further by the fact that the description of the sacrificial victim's death very strongly recalls Lucretius' account of the sacrifice of Iphigenia.<sup>167</sup> It is difficult to know exactly how to read these echoes. Certainly, the allusion contributes to the horror of the passage, and to the humanization of the victim. The fact that the

<sup>166</sup> For Empedoclean and Lucretian echoes here and elsewhere in Pythagoras' speech, see Bömer (1986) *ad* 96–8 and 102–3, and Hardie (1995). Cf. also Virgil's version of the Lucretian sacrifice at *Geo.* 3.486–93 (*infula . . . circumdata*, 'crowned with a fillet', *DRN* 1.87 ~ *circumdatur infula vitta*, 'it was being crowned with a fillet', *Geo.* 3.487 ~ *vittis insignis et auro*, 'splendid with fillets and gilded horns', *Met.* 15.131; *ante aras adstare*, 'standing before the altar', *DRN* 1.89 ~ *stans . . . ad aram*, 'standing at the altar', *Geo.* 3.486 ~ *sistitur ante aras*, 'it is brought to stand before the altar', *Met.* 15.132; *tinguntur sanguine cultri*, 'the knife is wet with blood', *Geo.* 3.492 ~ *percussaque sanguine cultros*, 'it is struck, and [stains] the knife with its blood', *Met.* 15.134; *impositis ardent altaria fibris*, 'the entrails, placed upon the altar, burn', *Geo.* 3.490 ~ *ereptas viventi pectore fibris*, 'entrails torn from its living breast', *Met.* 15.136).

<sup>167</sup> In addition to the parallels noted in n. 166 above, cf. also *inter cunctantis cecidit moribunda ministros*, 'it fell dying amongst the hesitant attendants', 488 with *ferrum celare ministros*, 'the attendants hiding the knife', *DRN* 1.90 and *terram . . . petebat . . . tremibunda*, 'she sank trembling to the ground', 1.92, 95.

sacrificial animal recalls the human victim in Lucretius and, more distantly, the once-human victim in Empedocles, tends once again to blur the distinction between human and animal and to invite our sympathy for the creature's sufferings.<sup>168</sup> But we cannot ignore the fact that, in Virgil's models, the agents of that suffering were the sacrificers themselves.<sup>169</sup> In the *Georgics* the situation is more complex. Are the gods rejecting this sacrifice, preventing the Norici from expiating some unknown crime? Or is the plague a purely natural phenomenon, and would the sacrifice have been futile even if it had been duly completed? Is the animal doubly a victim, once of human beings and once of the blind forces of nature? Here again, we, like the Norici, are left in the dark.

The final book contains only one reference to sacrifice; but it occupies a prominent position at the very end of the poem. The *bougonia*, though not itself a sacrifice,<sup>170</sup> is traced back to Aristaeus' expiatory offering to the nymphs of four bulls and four heifers. Aristaeus' success brings the poem to an end on a positive note: we have come full circle back to the ritual piety of the first book. And yet it is far from clear that the successful sacrifice with which the poem ends cancels out the failed sacrifice at the end of the previous book. There is no straightforward contrast between piety and impiety, or even between death and rebirth. Aristaeus' success provides a kind of answer to the failure of the Norici: like them, he seems to have lost the favour of the gods, but wins it back through his meticulous obedience to divine commands. Yet, as we saw, it is not at all obvious what offence – if any – the Norici have committed, and (unlike Aristaeus) they have no means of expiation. Because he is himself semi-divine, Aristaeus has privileged access to a kind of knowledge denied to

<sup>168</sup> Particularly if we also bear in mind the Empedoclean (and Aeschylean) background: behind Virgil's sacrificial scene lie two accounts of human sacrifice (Iphigenia treated as an animal) and one where what appears to be an animal sacrifice is on some level a human sacrifice (the animal body contains the soul of the sacrificer's son).

<sup>169</sup> Note also that the symptoms of the dying plough-ox in 520–2 strongly recall another Lucretian passage where animal sacrifice is implicitly condemned, 2.352–66.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Dyson (1996), pp. 280f., who suggests that the *bougonia* resembles a sacrifice in some respects, though there are also important differences (the method of slaughter, the fact that the animal is not eaten, and, above all, its reluctance (*multa reluctanti*, 'with much struggling', 301)). Cf. also the controversy between Habinek (1990) and Thomas (1991): Habinek draws on anthropological models to suggest that Aristaeus' sacrifice resolves tensions and restores order after the disruption brought about by the deaths of Eurydice and Orpheus; Thomas, however, questions the appropriateness of the anthropological approach, and argues that the slaughter of oxen in 549–51 is not, strictly speaking, a sacrifice, since the animals are left to rot and not consumed by the celebrants.

ordinary human beings. The inset story of Orpheus also suggests the importance of ritual correctness; and yet the poet seems to have gone out of his way to make its hero a sympathetic figure. Orpheus is overcome by the madness of love, and seems to have little choice in determining his fate. The happy ending of the Aristaeus story is doubly qualified by the two tragedies which have preceded it.

On another level, the *bougonia* acts as a kind of answer to the problem of pain and suffering raised at the end of book 3 and, less explicitly, throughout the poem. I have been tracing a pattern of increasing emphasis on the cruelty of animal sacrifice and the unfairness of pain and death. This pattern continues into book 4, where the poet describes the death of the victim of *bougonia* in gruesome detail (295–314). But at the end of the poem, it becomes clear that this cruelty achieves its purpose: the life of the calf is exchanged for many lives, as bees swarm from the ‘womb’ (*utero*, 556) of the dead animal. Again, Ovid offers a perceptive commentary here: in the passage from book 1 of the *Fasti* to which I referred earlier, he makes Aristaeus the inventor not just of the *bougonia* but of the sacrifice of cattle in general. His account concludes with the comment, *mille animas una necata dedit* (‘one living thing, slaughtered, brought forth a thousand’, 380). The killing of a single animal is justified because it serves a higher purpose; and, by extension, death is necessary for the creation of new life. As we saw in the previous chapter,<sup>171</sup> this last sentiment is very Lucretian, and is given memorable expression in *DRN* 3.964–71. But, typically, the argument is invoked by Virgil in a very un-Lucretian context – to confirm the validity of animal sacrifice. At the same time, the juxtaposition of the Aristaeus and Orpheus stories seems once again to undermine the consoling ending. Orpheus’ overwhelming grief for his beloved Eurydice counteracts the notion that the continuation of the race as a whole, or the greater good of society, can fully compensate for the death of the individual.

If the end of the *Georgics* provides a kind of resolution to the uncertainties and tensions which dominate the rest of the poem, it is a very partial one. The poet gives us no clear picture of the nature of the divine nor of the relationship between gods, humans and animals. Different possibilities – the traditional piety of Hesiod, the providentialism of Aratus and the Stoics, Lucretian rationalism and materialism – are passed in review, but

<sup>171</sup> See p. 49 above.

none is accepted as a wholly satisfying explanation for the joys and hardships of life. The gods seem sometimes close and benevolent, sometimes distant and indifferent or even malevolent; the natural world is both kindly and threatening; animal sacrifice can be viewed as cruel and useless or as harsh but necessary. Proteus in the epyllion may have full knowledge of past, present and future; but the lot of ordinary human beings is more like that of the Norici, who are helpless to learn the will of the gods or to discover the causes of the plague.<sup>172</sup>

I have insisted that the apparent optimism of the ending does not cancel out the darker notes struck earlier in the poem. Yet, by the same token, the uncertainties which I have been tracing do not entirely undermine the absolute imperative of book 1, *in primis venerare deos* ('above all worship the gods'). Ritual piety may succeed or fail; all the farmer can do is to carry on, with no guarantee of success. We might compare the attitude of Cotta, the Academic spokesman in Cicero's *De Natura Deorum*, who insists on the importance of ancestral religious ritual, despite his professed uncertainty about the divine nature.<sup>173</sup> The poet of the *Georgics* similarly eschews the doctrinaire certainties of both Lucretian Epicureanism and Aratean Stoicism, and puts nothing definite in their place. In the absence of any absolute certainty, the farmer's humble piety is nevertheless held up for admiration: if it is impossible to attain the happy state of the philosopher, who has trampled fear beneath his feet, still, 'that man too is fortunate who knows the rustic gods, Pan and old Silvanus and the sister Nymphs' (2.493f.).

<sup>172</sup> Human ignorance of the divine plan is also an important theme in the *Aeneid*, particularly in book 2, where Aeneas and his men have considerable difficulty, despite their best intentions, in determining where they should found their city. Dido, in book 4, is also unaware that she is being manipulated by the gods; her prayers and sacrifices fail not because of any ritual misconduct, but because her personal desires stand in the way of Jupiter's plan for the foundation of Rome. The idea that one cannot guarantee the efficacy of sacrifice goes back to Homer; see, for example, *Il.* 2.420. That there should be a plan, however, is required by the conventions of epic; in the *Georgics*, the part played by the gods in governing human affairs is much less clear.

<sup>173</sup> See esp. *N.D.* 3.5.



## *Virgil's metamorphoses: mythological allusions*

In chapter 3, I suggested that connexions can be established between ambiguities in Virgil's treatment of the gods and the natural environment, and the shifting balance of intertextual relations which underlies the text of the *Georgics*. The stance of the didactic narrator is sometimes Lucretian, sometimes Hesiodic or Aratean; frequently these different voices clash with each other, and their divergent views are juxtaposed in such a way that tensions and conflicts are emphasized rather than resolved. Lucretius' clear-cut and rationalistic world-view is particularly subject to challenge by these means; Virgil constantly problematizes the Epicurean conviction that all natural phenomena are readily explicable in scientific terms, either by bringing Lucretius into conflict with his other didactic intertexts, or by alluding simultaneously to passages of the *DRN* which can be made to seem contradictory, or by using Lucretian language to frame un-Lucretian ideas. Similar strategies can be traced in Virgil's treatment of myth, which can be seen in part as a response to Lucretius' complex and subtle use of mythological language and imagery.

I have argued elsewhere<sup>1</sup> that Lucretius' use of myth is the product of an innovative and sophisticated theory of its nature and origins. In two important passages, the discussions of the origins of religion in *DRN* 5.1161–1240 and of the phenomenon of echoes in 4.580–94, the poet sketches the outlines of a theory which would account for the creation of mythology. Early men (or ignorant rustics) observe the heavens or strange terrestrial phenomena which they are unable to explain. They then attribute these phenomena – either through fear or for the pleasure of tale-telling – to the presence or influence of the gods: *ergo perfugium sibi habebant omnia divis tradere* ('So they took refuge in handing everything over to the gods'), as Lucretius puts it in 5.1186. It is of course the

<sup>1</sup> Gale (1994a), esp. pp. 129–55.

Epicurean poet's duty to rid mankind of superstitious fear by demythologizing these phenomena and banishing the gods once and for all to the *intermundia*, the spaces between worlds; but Lucretius also sees myth as having an inherently attractive psychagogic power, which is of potentially immense value to him in his enterprise of converting the non-Epicurean reader to a superficially unattractive philosophy.<sup>2</sup> His solution to this dilemma is to demythologize natural processes without repudiating the use of mythological imagery and language. This is achieved in two ways: Lucretius will either juxtapose a mythological image with the true, atomistic explanation for the phenomenon under discussion, usually accompanied by a blunt statement that the myth is to be rejected as 'far removed from the truth'; or he will employ mythological language in the process of setting out his Epicurean account, without explicit reference to the myth. So, for example, the story of Phaethon is briefly recounted in support of the theory that the balance of the elements is precarious and will eventually bring about the destruction of the earth; but Lucretius immediately continues:

scilicet ut veteres Graium cecinere poetae.  
quod procul a vera nimis est ratione repulsum.  
ignis enim superare potest ubi materiai  
ex infinita sunt corpora plura coorta . . . 5.405-8

So, at least, the old Greek poets sang; but their story is very far removed from true reason. In fact fire can only gain the ascendancy when more particles of its matter come together from infinite space . . .

Several examples of implicit reference to myth can be found in Lucretius' account of the origins of civilization at the end of book 5. In explaining the discovery of fire, for instance, the poet tells how a thunderbolt brought down the heavenly fire as a gift to mankind and distributed it amongst them (*fulmen detulit in terram mortalibus ignem | primitus, inde omnis flammaram diditur ardor*, 'it was a bolt of lightning that first brought fire down to earth for mortal men, and from here the heat of flame was spread amongst them', 5.1092f.). Later, the sun taught man the art of cooking (*cibum coquere . . . sol docuit*, 'the sun taught them to cook their food',

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 1.926-50 = 4.1-25. The 'bitterness' of the philosophy consists both in its demand for asceticism and rejection of the 'worldly goods' described in the proem to book 2, and in its abstract, impersonal view of the cosmos (cf. De Lacy (1957), Wardy (1988), Gale (1994a), pp. 144f.). On the psychagogic power of poetry and myth, see also Schrijvers (1970), pp. 27-60.

1102f.). The choice of vocabulary here recalls myths of divine benefactors, specifically Prometheus. The passage almost amounts to an allegorical interpretation of the myth – but Lucretius never refers to the story explicitly, nor does he depart from the strictly rationalistic tone of his culture-history. By exploiting mythological imagery in this way, Lucretius is able to have his cake and eat it. The myths are rationalized, and thus disposed of as serious accounts of natural processes, but mythological language is retained as an attractive and vivid way of describing the natural world. In addition, such passages implicitly suggest ways in which the myths might have originated: in primitive attempts to account for droughts and floods, or to understand how cultural developments like the discovery of fire came about. The originality of Lucretius' theory lies above all in the suggestion that the myth-makers were the victims of error. The Stoics and other allegorists were inclined to see myth as embodying some ultimate truth; Lucretius, on the contrary, implies that scientific study of natural phenomena can help to explain the myths, but will not accept the view that myths are allegories to be 'decoded'.

A special case is the hymn to Venus in the proem. Here, the reader has to wait some time before the poet undermines the attractive but ultimately misleading picture of the goddess' power over the natural world with which the poem begins.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, the opening images of nature's creative aspect *are* eventually 'corrected', as Lucretius steers his reader away from a personal to an impersonal view of the natural world, and Venus is replaced by *natura creatrix et perfica* ('nature the creator and the finisher'), the embodiment of the cyclical process of growth and decay.<sup>4</sup>

Virgil can be seen to react to Lucretius' use of mythological imagery in three main ways, which may be termed conflation, remythologization

<sup>3</sup> Exactly how long the reader will have to wait is determined in part by the textual problem at lines 44–9. Even if the lines are accepted as genuine, however, the process of enlightenment is still a gradual one. The reader is temporarily left either with a misleading image or with a blatant contradiction, which will be resolved only by a gradual process of substitution, as Venus' functions are taken over by *natura* and Epicurus. For a more detailed account (and further bibliography) see Gale (1994a), pp. 208–23; on the textual problem, see now Deufert (1996), pp. 32–40.

<sup>4</sup> See especially 2.1105–74, where Lucretius describes how the earth was created and brought to completion by nature (*donec ad extremum crescendi perfica finem | omnia perduxit rerum natura creatrix*, 'until nature the creator of the world finished everything and brought it to the final limit of its growth', 1116f.), and is now on the way to inevitable collapse and destruction (*sic igitur magni quoque circum moenia mundi | expugnata dabunt labem putris <que> ruinas*, 'so too in the same way the walls which surround this great world will be stormed and fall in crumbling ruin', 1144f.).

and extension. Each of these has the effect of problematizing Lucretius' confident assurance that myth and the natural world can be explained in simple terms. Virgil achieves this effect either by *conflating* Lucretian and non-Lucretian passages; or by *remythologizing* phenomena demythologized by Lucretius; or by *extending* Lucretius' allegorizing methods to myths which the earlier poet deals with in a rather different way.

### *Conflation and remythologization*

As we saw in chapter 3, conflation of different models is particularly prominent in *Georgics* 1. Hesiodic, Aratean and Lucretian echoes combine in various ways to create a problematic and ambiguous picture of the natural world and of the relationship between human beings and the gods. The 'aetiology of *labor*', in particular, simultaneously recalls the 'soft' primitivism of Hesiod, the providentialism of Aratus and the rationalist culture-history of Lucretius; this complex of allusion is partly responsible for the difficulty of the passage, which seems to suggest that work is simultaneously good and bad, that the end of the Golden Age was at once a blessing and a curse, that the development of culture came about both through human ingenuity and through the providential intervention of the gods. Similarly, the weather signs detailed in the second part of the book are both described as instances of Jupiter's providential care (351–5) and explained in pseudo-scientific language reminiscent of Lucretius (415–23); while the account of the five terrestrial zones in 231–56 recalls the anti-teleological argument of *DRN* 5.195–234, but reverses Lucretius' conclusion by making the temperate zones a gift of the gods.

In each of these passages, language suggestive of Lucretius' rationalizing approach to natural phenomena is combined with allusion to other texts which offer mythological accounts of the same phenomena. The effect of this conflation is to suggest that the different world-views embodied in the various intertexts have equal validity; that their accounts of reality are equally plausible, if incompatible with each other. The exclusivity of Lucretius' rationalist philosophy is called into question: confident assertion is replaced by a less dogmatic and more speculative account of the way things are.

Other passages in the first book and elsewhere reverse Lucretius' demythologization of the natural world. Again, several examples were

touched on in chapter 3. In 1.60–4, for instance, Virgil recalls Lucretius' account of the birth of the first men from the earth:

quo tempore primum  
Deucalion vacuum lapides iactavit in orbem,  
unde homines nati, *durum* genus. Geo. 1.61–3

At that time when Deucalion first threw into an empty world the stones from which men were born, a hard race.

at *genus* humanum multo fuit illud in arvis  
*durius*, ut decuit, tellus quod dura creasset.  
DRN 5.925f.

But at that time the race of men on the land was much harder, as was fitting, in that the hard earth had created them.

Lucretius has effectively rationalized the myth of Deucalion and the flood, alluding to the Hesiodic and Pindaric pun on *λᾱός* (race) and *λᾱᾱς* (stone);<sup>5</sup> the scientific hypothesis that the first human beings were born from the earth – legitimated by appeal to analogies between microcosm and macrocosm and by the exclusion of other possibilities (5.783–805) – is substituted for the literal metamorphosis of stones into men. Virgil, however, reverses the process of demythologization by echoing Lucretius' *genus . . . durius* ('a harder race') while reintroducing the mythical figure Deucalion.

Two similar passages, the spring storm (1.316–34) and the 'praise of spring' (2.323–45), were discussed in detail in chapter 3. In both cases, Virgil echoes passages of the *DRN* where Lucretius' language suggests a mythological scenario (the *hieros gamos* or 'sacred marriage' of earth and sky; Jupiter as god of thunder), while rigorously excluding the possibility that the gods might really be involved.<sup>6</sup> Once again, Virgil responds by restoring Jupiter, who is represented in both cases as directly controlling the weather; the dialogue with Lucretius is further complicated, in this instance, by the tension between the two Virgilian passages, in one of which Jupiter is represented as indifferent to human suffering while in the

<sup>5</sup> Hesiod fr. 234 Merkelbach–West; Pindar, *Ol.* 9.43–6; cf. Call. *S.H.* 295. It is worth noting also that Lucretius demythologizes the flood in 5.411–15, and that metamorphosis myths in general are dismissed as *adynata* in 2.701–6 (cf. 1.165f.).

<sup>6</sup> The notion that thunderbolts are the weapons of the gods is strenuously rejected in 6.379–422; the divinity of the earth is explicitly denied in advance of Lucretius' version of the *hieros gamos* in 2.991–8 (see esp. 2.644–54, and cf. also the briefer version of the *hieros gamos* in book 1, where the whole natural cycle is ascribed to the work of *natura* (263f.)).

other the mildness of spring is attributed to 'the indulgence of heaven' (2.345).<sup>7</sup>

Virgil's account of the five terrestrial zones has already been mentioned as an example of the conflation of different models; the latter part of the passage offers a further example of remythologization. The rather obscure lines (240–3) in which Virgil locates the underworld within the system of zones explicitly contradict Lucretius. However we suppose that Virgil envisaged the relationship between underworld and antipodes,<sup>8</sup> it is fairly clear that the Styx and the *Manes* (the spirits of the dead) are said to be somewhere beneath our feet (*sub pedibus*, 243). One reason for the odd phrasing is surely that Virgil is echoing the proem to *DRN* 3, where Lucretius describes his reaction to Epicurus' philosophy as a mystical revelation:

nam simul ac ratio tua coepit vociferari  
naturam rerum . . .  
moenia mundi  
discedunt, totum video per inane geri res.  
...  
at contra nusquam apparent Acherusia templa  
nec tellus obstat quin omnia dispiciantur  
*sub pedibus* quaecumque infra per inane geruntur.

3.14–18, 25–7

For as soon as your reason begins to proclaim the nature of the universe . . . the walls of the world dissolve, and I see everything that takes place in all the vastness of space . . . But the realms of Acheron are nowhere to be seen, nor does the earth prevent me from seeing everything that is happening in the void beneath my feet.

The verbal echo points up the reversal of Lucretius' claim that the underworld, far from lying below the earth, does not exist at all. Elsewhere, Lucretius ridicules the idea that anyone might live on the underside of the earth,<sup>9</sup> whereas Virgil envisages two possibilities: either the antipodeans live in perpetual darkness (like Homer's Cimmerians<sup>10</sup>), or

<sup>7</sup> Cf. also 1.23, where the poet appeals to the gods who 'let fall rain from heaven' (*qui . . . caelo dimittitis imbrem*). The phrase echoes *DRN* 6.496 (*umor . . . demissus ut imber*, 'water . . . let fall as rain') and 509 (*nubes <umorem> mittere certant*, 'the clouds compete to send down rain').

<sup>8</sup> Mynors is more helpful than Thomas here; he suggests that the *Manes* are envisaged as inhabiting the Antarctic region.

<sup>9</sup> *DRN* 1.1052–82. The phrasing in 1065–7 is particularly close to *Geo.* 1.249–51.

<sup>10</sup> 248 ~ *Od.* 11.19.

they have daylight while we have night, and vice versa. The second alternative is picturesquely expressed as a procession of deities: Aurora leads the day, followed by the rising Sun with his snorting chariot-team, while on the other side of the earth Vesper is lighting his lamp in the evening. This pageant might be dismissed as a purely decorative elaboration on the formulaic expressions which regularly mark the passage of time in epic; but given the Lucretian context, it seems plausible to see the process of remythologization at work here too. Aurora and the chariot of the Sun both figure implicitly in a passage in *DRN* 5, in which Lucretius discusses the causes of day and night:

at nox obruit ingenti caligine terras,  
aut ubi de longo cursu sol ultima caeli  
impulit atque suos efflavit languidus ignis  
concussos itere et labefactos aere multo,<sup>11</sup>  
aut quia sub terras cursum convertere cogit  
vis eadem, supra quae terras pertulit orbem.

Tempore item certo roseam Matuta per oras  
aetheris auroram differt et lumina pandit,  
aut quia sol idem, sub terras ille revertens  
anticipat caelum radiis accendere temptans,  
aut quia conveniunt ignes . . .

5.650–9

But night covers the earth in immense darkness either when the sun reaches the edge of the sky after his long journey and wearily breathes out his fires, exhausted by the journey and worn out from crossing so much air; or because the same force which carried his globe over the earth now forces him to make his return journey below the earth. Similarly, Morning spreads the rosy dawn over the shores of heaven and shows her light at a fixed time either because the same sun, coming back beneath the earth, sends on his rays before him and strives to set the sky alight, or else because fires come together . . .

Once again, a process of demythologization can be seen at work here: mythological imagery is combined with a rationalistic account of the regular recurrence of sunset and sunrise, and the juxtaposition not only enlivens the discussion but also implicitly suggests how the myth might have come into existence (the dawn is *like* a lamp, the sun travels across the sky *like* a charioteer). But the context of the Virgilian passage seems to

<sup>11</sup> With the 'weary' fires of 652f., cf. Alexander of Aetolia fr. 1 Powell (Helios feeds his horses so that they will not grow tired on their journey across the heavens).

suggest that taking the images more literally may be as satisfactory a way of accounting for the phenomena: the gods, or Providence, may be behind the whole process after all.<sup>12</sup>

A final example of this kind of remythologization can be found in the finale to book 1. The whole list of portents which supposedly followed the murder of Julius Caesar and presaged the battle of Philippi can be seen on one level as engaging with the sixth book of the *DRN*, where Lucretius' main object is to demonstrate that frightening phenomena such as earthquakes, lightning, volcanic eruptions and plagues are not manifestations of divine displeasure, but perfectly natural occurrences which are subject to a rational, mechanistic explanation.<sup>13</sup> The idea that thunder and lightning may be used for divination is explicitly ridiculed in 6.379–86, and most of the other portents in Virgil's list are dealt with either in book 6 or elsewhere in the poem.<sup>14</sup> Lucretius is most strongly recalled, however, in the lines which deal with the eruption of Aetna (471–3):

quotiens Cyclopum effervere in agros  
vidimus undantem ruptis fornacibus Aetnam,  
flammarumque globos liquefactaque volvere saxa!

How often we saw the fires of Aetna boil over from its burst furnace  
and flood the fields of the Cyclopes, hurling gouts of flame and  
molten rocks!

<sup>12</sup> Cf. also Lucretius' procession of the seasons in 5.737–47. Virgil, like Lucretius (cf. Gale (1994a), pp. 81–3), may have artistic representations in mind: compare, for example, the chariots of Helios and Nyx/Selene on the East pediment and the North metopes of the Parthenon, or the figures of Sol, Aurora and Luna on the breastplate of the Prima Porta Augustus.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *DRN* 5.78–90 and 6.48–91. For the Epicurean, the study of physics is not an end in itself, but is only of value in so far as it is conducive to the attainment of *ataraxia*: see Epic. *KD* 11. On this aspect of *DRN* 6, see further Joep (1989) and ch. 6 below.

<sup>14</sup> Eclipses: 5.751–70; volcanic eruptions: 6.639–702; the clash of weapons: cf. Lucretius' demythologization of the thunderbolt-as-weapon discussed above, and his frequent references to the terrifying sound of thunder (e.g. 6.129, 155, 218, 288); earthquakes: 6.535–607; mysterious voices (traditionally attributed to Faunus, e.g. Varro, *L.L.* 7.36, Cic. *Div.* 1.101, *N.D.* 2.6): 4.580–94; ghosts: 4.35–45 and 759–67 (the Virgilian phrase *simulacra modis pallentia miris*, 'phantoms, strangely pale', is a direct quotation from *DRN* 1.123, though Lucretius himself may be quoting Ennius; see Skutsch (1985), p. 155); floods: cf. 1.280–94; comets: cf. 2.203–9 and 5.1191; stones dripping blood and lightning from a clear sky are both *adynata* in Lucretius (1.884 and 6.247f.). The main model for 477–83, however, is Apollonius (*Arg.* 4.1280–7). For other versions of the prodigy list, see Mynors *ad* 469ff.



Virgil's language is reminiscent of two descriptions of Aetna in the *DRN*, 1.722–5 and 6.680–93.<sup>15</sup> The first passage is part of Lucretius' tribute to Empedocles; here, the volcano is personified in such a way as to suggest the myth of Typhoeus, the giant who was imprisoned under the mountain by Zeus/Jupiter. The threat of eruption is figured as a renewed attack on the heavens, recalling the prophecy of Prometheus in the *Prometheus Bound*:

hic Aetnaea minantur  
murmura flammaram rursum se colligere iras,  
faucibus eruptos iterum vis ut vomat ignis  
ad caelumque ferat flammai fulgura rursum. *DRN* 1.722–5

Here the rumbling of Aetna gives warning that it is gathering the flames of its fury again, and preparing to spew out the fire which will burst once more from its throat and hurl its lightning at the heavens once again.

ἔνθεν ἐκραγήσονται ποτε  
ποταμοὶ πρὸς δάπτοντες ἀγρίαις γνάθοις  
τῆς καλλικάρπου Σικελίας λευροῦς γύας·  
τοιόνδε Τυφῶς ἐξαναζέσει χόλον  
θερμοῖς ἀπλάτου βέλεσι πυρπνόου ζάλης.

Aesch. (?) *P.V.* 367–71

From there one day rivers of flame will burst forth, devouring the level meadows of fertile Sicily with furious jaws: so fiercely will the wrath of Typho blaze up, in hot darts of terrible, fiery rain.

This allusion is part of a complex of imagery associated with the figure of the philosopher throughout the *DRN*: Epicurus (and, by implication, Empedocles) is represented as attacking heaven like the giants, with the purpose of overthrowing the gods of mythology.<sup>16</sup> Lucretius reverses the traditional moral drawn from the myth throughout antiquity: rather than representing *hybris*, disorder and barbarity, the 'giants' have become heroic figures, challenging and overthrowing the tyranny of *religio*. Empedocles is implicitly aligned with the Epicureans as one of the opponents

<sup>15</sup> Cf. also the 'fiery' character described in 3.294–8.

<sup>16</sup> In addition to the passage under discussion, see especially 1.62–79 (Epicurus 'assaults' the heavens, undaunted by Jupiter's thunderbolt) and 5.113–21 (the Epicurean attack on astral religion compared to the Giants' assault on Olympus). On ancient interpretations of the gigantomachy, see further Vian (1952), Hardie (1986), pp. 85–90 and 209–13.

of religious tradition (despite the fact that his physical theory is seen as fundamentally flawed).<sup>17</sup>

The description of Aetna in *DRN* 6 alludes to another myth commonly associated with the volcano, which was, according to tradition, not only the prison of Typhoeus but also the forge of the Cyclopes.<sup>18</sup> This idea is latent in Lucretius' account of volcanic eruption, just as the figure of Jupiter the Thunderer is latent in his account of thunder and lightning. In 6.681, the poet speaks of 'the furnace of Aetna' (*Aetnae fornacibus*), and in fact the mountain turns out to behave rather like a forge or furnace, with the action of wind in underground caverns fanning its flames. In a word, the Cyclopes and their forge have been demythologized.

Virgil seems to combine these two passages in his version, and also to refer back through Lucretius to the prophecy of Aeschylus' Prometheus. The phrases *Cyclopum agros* ('the fields of the Cyclopes', 471) and *fornacibus* ('furnace', 473) recall the 'Cyclopean' forge of *DRN* 6, while the 'bursting' of the mountain and the rocks hurled into the sky suggest that Typhoeus has escaped his prison as Prometheus prophesied.<sup>19</sup> Virgil has both remythologized Lucretius and restored the conventional moral value to the myth. Typhoeus no longer stands for the heroic philosopher, but is now a symbol of cosmic disorder; his escape both symbolizes and foreshadows the impiety and destructiveness of Civil War.

This recurring pattern of remythologization can be read as a kind of critique of Lucretius' use of mythological language and imagery. The problem confronting Lucretius is that the process of demythologization can easily be reversed. If the sun behaves like a charioteer, or thunderbolts appear to be weapons aimed by some supernatural power, might it not be because these phenomena really are controlled by the gods? Lucretius tries to avoid ambiguity by juxtaposing myth with reality and so emphasizing the artificiality of his own metaphors. But the effect of Virgil's

<sup>17</sup> Note also the comparison with the Delphic oracle in 1.736–9, which is repeated with reference to the *DRN* itself in 5.110–13. Here too Empedocles is allied with the enlightened Epicureans against conventional piety.

<sup>18</sup> The Cyclopes are denizens of Aetna in *Geo.* 4.173, and *Aetnaei* ('of Aetna') in *Aen.* 8. Cf. *Cic. Div.* 2.43.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. esp. *effervere* . . . | . . . *ruptis fornacibus Aetnam* ('Aetna boils over from its burst furnace') with *vastis Aetnae fornacibus efflet* ('breathed out from the huge furnace of Aetna', *DRN* 6.681) and *faucibus eruptos* ('bursting from its throat', 1.724); *flammarumque globos liquefactaque volvere saxa* ('hurling gouts of flame and molten rocks') with *extruditque simul mirando pondere saxa* ('at the same time it flings out rocks of amazing weight', *DRN* 6.692) and *flammarum* . . . *iras* ('the flames of its fury', 1.723). *Cyclopum* . . . *in agros* | . . . *undantem* ('flooding the fields of the Cyclopes') recalls the rivers of flame which pour over Sicily in Prometheus' prophecy.

remythologizing is once again to blur and problematize the clear and certain contours of the Epicurean universe.

### *Extension*

The myths of Typhoeus and the Cyclopes, like most of those discussed up to this point, might be described as 'nature myths'. Whatever their origins, they were firmly associated by Virgil's day with volcanic eruptions and thunderbolts, just as Ceres is associated with the growth of crops and Prometheus with the discovery of fire. They could thus be demythologized by juxtaposition with a scientific account of the phenomenon in question. But there are two further classes of myths which Lucretius tends to handle rather differently: stories involving metamorphosis and hybrid monsters (centaurs, scyllas, the Chimaera). Like many of his contemporaries, Lucretius is inclined simply to dismiss these stories as nonsensical.<sup>20</sup> Throughout the *DRN*, the species are regarded as fixed and unchanging, with their own distinct characteristics.<sup>21</sup> Though not all the creatures produced by the accidental conjunction of elements in the early phases of Lucretius' zoogony are fitted to survive, there is no evolution as such: apart from those which have become extinct altogether, the animals and plants which exist now are the same as the ones which first sprang from the earth. *A fortiori*, monsters like the centaur can never have existed at all: human beings and horses differ so greatly in their physiology that such a conjunction could never have come into being, let alone survived (5.878–89). Myths of this kind did not of course appear from nowhere, and Lucretius does suggest some possible sources: the fact that we are able to imagine hybrid monsters is attributed explicitly to the accidental conjunction of *simulacra* (visual images), which sometimes stick together in flight (4.732–48), and another passage earlier in book 4 (129–40) seems to imply that stories of giants and metamorphoses were inspired by pictures in the clouds.<sup>22</sup> But more often, stories of giants,

<sup>20</sup> E.g. Cic. *Tusc.* 1.10–11, *N.D.* 2.5; Sen. *Ep.* 24.18, 82.16; Ov. *Tr.* 4.7.11–18. The Centaurs, in particular, figure frequently in philosophical contexts as 'the type of the non-ens' (Pease (1955) *ad* Cic. *N.D.* 1.105); already in Xenophanes they are dismissed as πλάσματα τῶν προτέρων ('fabrications of our ancestors', fr. 1.22 D–K; for further examples, see Pease *ad* 1.105). The collections of rationalizing explanations of myths by Palaephatus and others (see Festa (1902)) also tend to concentrate on myths of this type.

<sup>21</sup> See esp. 1.188–90, 3.296–306, 5.920–4.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Aristoph. *Clouds* 346–50, Cic. *Div.* 2.49, Themist. *in Parv. Nat.* p. 37.29–31 Wendland, Alex. Aphrod. *in Meteor.* 3.4 (p. 148.28–30 Hayduck). The fact that the Centaurs were the children of Nephele (see e.g. *Aen.* 7.674f.) offered obvious scope for allegoresis.

chimaerae, centaurs and metamorphoses simply figure as *adynata*: if creation *ex nihilo* were possible, nature should be able to produce gigantic beings who could walk across the sea; if just any kind of atom could combine with any other, hybrids and metamorphoses would be commonplace; if the atoms had colour as well as shape, every species should occur in every colour, and we would see white ravens and black swans.<sup>23</sup> All of these phenomena are dismissed by Lucretius as things that manifestly do not occur (*quorum nil fieri manifestum est*, 'it is obvious that none of these things ever happens', 1.188 = 2.707).

In dealing with 'nature myths', Lucretius appeals, as we have seen, to a modified version of the allegorical tradition. Though the notion that myths of this kind are allegories is rejected, they are nevertheless interpreted as garbled or misguided representations of natural phenomena. But the allegorical tradition attaching to the hybrid monsters and metamorphosis myths is by and large ignored. It is here that Virgil can be seen as extending Lucretius' allegorizing technique. Rather than treat myths of this kind as simple impossibilities, Virgil implicitly suggests that they have a deeper meaning. Even if stories of hybrids and metamorphoses are not literally true, they may be meaningful on a symbolic level.<sup>24</sup> I suggested in the last chapter that Virgil's handling of the relationship between humans and animals tends to blur the clear distinctions set up in the *DRN*: all species are subject to passion, disease and death, and the transcendence of human rationality cannot be taken for granted. On a symbolic level, the boundaries between species can be transgressed; there may be more truth than Lucretius is prepared to admit in myths in which those boundaries break down.

Allusions to myths of metamorphosis are, in fact, notably frequent in the *Georgics*.<sup>25</sup> No doubt this can be attributed in part to the Alexandrian

<sup>23</sup> 1.199–203; 2.700–6; 2.817–25.

<sup>24</sup> The closest parallel in the *DRN* would be the discussion of underworld myths in 3.978–1023, where the punishments of legendary sinners in Hades are interpreted as symbolic projections of the anxieties to which the non-Epicurean is subject in this life (see Konstan (1973), pp. 22–7, Gale (1994a), pp. 36–8).

<sup>25</sup> Servius comments on many of the examples discussed below. See also Frenztz (1967), pp. 72–107. While it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between mythological allusion and more straightforward examples of personification or humanization, I count nine fairly secure allusions to metamorphoses or catasterisms and a further seven which are less certain; four references to hybrids and other monsters (including the Cyclops simile in 4.170–5, which is perhaps not altogether relevant here); and three explicit or implicit references to the gigantomachy. Other types of myth referred to relatively frequently are aetiological tales of divine *heuretai* (Liber, Ceres, Neptune, Minerva, Triptolemus and perhaps Aristaeus (*heuretes*

fascination with the bizarre and monstrous manifested, for example, in Nicander's lost *Heteroiumena*. But Alexandrianism is arguably combined with reaction to Lucretius' offhand rejection of these myths. Virgil himself seems to point us in this direction by flagging two of the most explicit references with clear allusions to the *DRN*.

Both passages occur in *Georgics* 3, the part of the poem which (as we have seen) engages most explicitly with Lucretius. It is here that Lucretius' faith in the power of *ratio* to overcome the passions is most strongly challenged: Virgil's humanization of the farmer's livestock is matched by a parallel 'animalization' of human beings in the central digression on *amor* and in the Noric cattle plague in the finale.<sup>26</sup> The forces of sexual attraction and disease break down the distinction between human and animal: under their influence, man (or woman) effectively becomes an animal.

This blurring of boundaries is reinforced by the references to metamorphosis myths.<sup>27</sup> Following in the tradition of allegorical interpreters who explained myths like Circe's transformation of the companions of Odysseus as metaphors for the brutalizing effect of surrender to the passions,<sup>28</sup> Virgil alludes to the stories of Saturn and Philyra and of Io and the gadfly in a context which implicitly connects them with the dehumanizing power of *amor*. Saturn's transformation into a horse features as the climactic *exemplum* in the brief catalogue of mythological horses in

of various branches of agriculture – including bee-keeping – in e.g. Oppian, *Cyn.* 4.265–72) in the proem to book 1; Ceres in 1.147; Erichthonius and the Lapiths in 3.113–17; Jupiter and the bees in 4.149–52; Aristaeus in the epyllion) and the Golden Age (explicitly in 1.121–46; implicitly in the *laudes Italiae* and the finales to books 2 and 3 (see pp. 218–19 and 225–6 below); cf. also Deucalion in 1.161–3). Apart from the examples of remythologization discussed above (which fall into a rather different class), these categories cover all instances of mythological allusion in the poem except for the following: 1.39 (and cf. 163–6; Ceres and Proserpina), 1.446f. (Aurora and Tithonus), 1. 512–14 (and cf. 4.560–2; implicit allusion to the myth of Phaethon? see pp. 35–6 above), 2.87 (the gardens of Alcinoüs), 3.3–8 (and cf. 19; Hercules, Hylas and other myths treated by earlier poets), 3.258–63 (Hero and Leander) and 3.267f. (the mares of Glaucus). The last two examples, both of which are closely related to the metamorphosis theme, are discussed in ch. 6 (pp. 221–3 below).

<sup>26</sup> See esp. 258–63 and 534–6, discussed on pp. 97 and 47 above.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Thomas *ad* 3.92–4 and 152–3.

<sup>28</sup> On the allegorical tradition, see p. 89 above. For a modern theory linking metamorphosis with sexual transgression, see Forbes Irving (1990), pp. 61–79. Forbes Irving notes that stories of animal metamorphosis usually involve disruption of normal (especially sexual) relationships. The recurrent pattern whereby a young woman is changed into an animal after an illicit sexual encounter 'reflects the traumatic effect of an unorthodox or illegitimate change from young girls to sexual objects' (p. 68); 'in each case the central theme of the story and the controlling metaphor is the idea that becoming an object of sexual interest and indulging in sexual activity makes one into an animal' (p. 79).

89–94. There is a touch of humour in the picture of the god's shamefaced flight from his angry wife; but the lines also anticipate the more serious treatment of the effects of *amor* in the central diatribe, where Leander's behaviour mirrors that of the love-maddened horse, the animal worst affected by the flame of passion.<sup>29</sup> Sexual passion symbolically transforms men (and even gods) into animals. The story of Io (152f.) similarly links passion and sexual jealousy with the loss of human identity. Here, the transformation itself is 'doubled' by the madness inflicted on Io by Juno and the gadfly: Io not only loses her human shape but also her reason,<sup>30</sup> like the animals goaded to frenzy by *amor*.<sup>31</sup>

In both places, Virgil juxtaposes the mythological allusion with a phrase reminiscent of Lucretius' anti-mythological polemics. Immediately before the reference to Saturn's transformation, the phrase *quorum Grai meminere poetae* ('of whom Greek poets told') is applied to the horses of Mars and Achilles (90), strongly recalling the 'distancing formula' *Graium ut cecinere poetae* ('as Greek poets sang', 6.754; slightly varied at 2.600 and 5.405) which Lucretius employs in rejecting the myths of Cybele, Phaethon and Minerva's hatred of the crow. Similarly, the gadfly's buzz (*asper, acerba sonans*, 'fierce and angry-sounding', 149) recalls Lucretius' ironic account of the labours of Hercules in the proem to *DRN* 5, where the dragon of the Hesperides is *asper, acerba tuens* ('fierce and angry-looking', 5.33).<sup>32</sup> These echoes underline the fact that Virgil is implicitly

<sup>29</sup> See p. 97 above.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Forbes Irving, pp. 62–79. It must be admitted that the symbolism of transformation is not so obviously appropriate here, since Io is the victim rather than the subject of both (Jupiter's) passion and (Juno's) jealousy. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that, in the subsequent discussion of *amor*, sexual attraction is depicted as something *inflicted* on both man and beast, as the gadfly is inflicted on Io: Venus, with her *caeci stimulos amoris* ('the goads of blind love', 210), also victimizes animals and humans, and breaks down the boundaries between them. Forbes Irving (1990), pp. 68f., points out that the apparent mismatch between 'crime' and punishment is common in myths of this type: it is often the male partner who initiates the sexual act, but the female who is transformed, and no real distinction is drawn between rape and seduction. Cf. also the implicit comparison drawn in *Aeneid* 7 between Io and Turnus, who bears her image on his shield: I have argued elsewhere (Gale (1997b)) that Io's fate symbolizes *both* Turnus' status as a victim of the gods *and* the 'bestial' element in his own character.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. *furit mugitibus aether* ('the air is filled with frenzied bellowing', 150) with *furias* ('frenzy', 244) and *furor* ('frenzy', 266). There are several other parallels between *amor* and the gadfly: both are associated with warm weather (154; 272), both put their victims to flight (*diffugiunt*, 'they flee', 150 and 277), both are threats from which the farmer must protect his livestock (*arcebis*, 'you must protect them', 155; *avertere*, 'ward off', 210). It may also be significant that the Greek name for the gadfly, *οἶστρος*, has the subsidiary meaning 'pang' or 'smart', and may be used in this sense of the pangs of love (LSJ s.v. §II; see e.g. Epic. fr. 483 Us.).

<sup>32</sup> Note also that the gadfly is referred to as *pestis* ('a plague', 153) and *monstrum* ('a monster',

taking up myths dismissed by Lucretius and subjecting them to the kind of quasi-allegorical interpretation which Lucretius had applied to the nature myths. The 'inner meaning' of the stories of Saturn and Io is to be deduced from the context: passion erases the narrow boundary which separates men and animals.

The 'animalization' of the plague-victims at the end of the book is similarly reflected in a very brief allusion to two figures who are related in significant ways to Saturn and Io: *Phillyrides Chiron* and *Amythaonius Melampus* ('Chiron son of Philyra and Melampus son of Amythaon', 550). Ostensibly, Chiron and Melampus are introduced as famous healers, reinforcing the idea (which goes back to Lucretius and Thucydides) that the art of medicine is helpless to resist the virulence of the disease.<sup>33</sup> But both figures also have thematic significance. Chiron was the offspring of the union between Philyra and the horse-Saturn, as the resounding patronymic *Phillyrides* reminds us; while Melampus is indirectly connected with the Io story as the healer of the Proetides, who were similarly afflicted;<sup>34</sup> their story is allusively linked to that of Io in *Eclogue* 6.<sup>35</sup> In Hesiod's version of the myth (fr. 132 Merkelbach–West), the madness of the Proetides is inflicted as a punishment for their 'hateful lust', and (while Chiron himself is something of an exception) the centaurs, with their lust for wine and women, are also embodiments of unbridled passion. The reference to Chiron and Melampus can thus be integrated into the complex of imagery which connects passion and brutalization with metamorphosis. Their failure to cure the plague symbolizes the inability of culture to transcend nature completely: though Melampus could restore the Proetides to (belief in) their human form, he cannot restore the brutalized Norici; though Chiron transcends the animal

152). Both terms are used by Lucretius in anti-mythological contexts: the hydra is *Lemaea pestis* ('the plague of Lerna') in 5.26, and the fauns and satyrs of 4.580–94 are *monstra ac portenta* ('monsters and prodigies'). See further p. 221 below.

<sup>33</sup> Thuc. 2.47–4; *DRN* 6.1179.

<sup>34</sup> The Proetides only suffer the illusion of metamorphosis, being afflicted with a madness which makes them believe that they are cows. For the link with Melampus, see Apollod. 1.9.12; Vitruv. 8.3.21. (Others attribute their healing to Artemis: see Bacch. 11.106–9, Call. *Hymn* 3.233–6.)

<sup>35</sup> The fate of the Proetides is contrasted in 6.48–51 with that of Pasiphae, who is apparently modelled on the Io of Calvus (cf. *Ed.* 6.47 and 52 with *Io* fr. 9 Courtney, and see further Thomas (1979); Clausen (1994), *ad Ed.* 6.48 suggests that the Proetides may actually have figured in Calvus' poem). The *Eclogue* as a whole offers interesting parallels to the treatment of the metamorphosis theme in the *Georgics*: here again, the themes of (perverse) passion and metamorphosis are intertwined, in the figures of Pasiphae, the Proetides, Atalanta, Scylla and Philomela, the last two of whom recur in the *Georgics*.

nature of his fellow centaurs, he cannot prevent the collapse of civilization brought about by the plague.<sup>36</sup>

Monsters and metamorphoses are especially prominent in book 3, perhaps because of its close engagement with Lucretius and its emphasis on the maddening, debasing effects of sex and disease; but a number of more or less explicit allusions can be found in the other three books of the poem. In many cases, these references are associated with passion (especially sexual passion), and can therefore be seen as building up towards the symbolic transformations which I have just discussed; in more general terms, they contribute to the blurring of the boundary between human and animal which was considered in the last chapter.<sup>37</sup>

Amongst the more explicit examples are Nisus and Scylla, who figure in the catalogue of signs foretelling clear weather in 1.404–9. Scylla and her father were transformed into birds,<sup>38</sup> whose characteristic pattern of behaviour (the predator's pursuit of its prey) is interpreted as a continuation of the characters' actions before the metamorphosis (the angry father's vengeful pursuit of his errant daughter).<sup>39</sup> Scylla's fate is explicitly represented here as a punishment for her lack of filial piety (*pro purpureo*

<sup>36</sup> Note that the failure of medicine in Lucretius is in its own way symbolic: the benefits of civilization are fragile and partial, compared with the true healing conferred by Epicurus' philosophy (cf. 6.1179 with the image of Epicurus as healer in 24f.). But the emphasis of Virgil's version is very different: the *Georgics* offers no obvious solution to the problems of passion and suffering, and Lucretius' conviction that the failures of civilization can be 'healed' by philosophical understanding is repeatedly opened to question. Clare (1995) links this passage with the 'aetiology of *labor*' in book 1, where the *artes* of civilization are developed as a means of combating the hardships introduced by Jupiter; here, *ars* itself does more harm than good (*quaesitae . . . nocent artes*, 'when help is sought from the art [of medicine] it proves injurious', 3.549 ~ *nocet*, 'injures', 1.121 and *extunderet artis*, 'hammer out the arts', 1.133).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Frentz (1967), pp. 134f.: Frentz concludes that the frequency of allusion to metamorphosis myths can be attributed partly to an Alexandrianizing interest in aetiology, and partly to 'einen bestimmten Gedanken . . . im ganzen Werk . . .: die Welt ist ein Kosmos, in dem Pflanze, Tier, Mensch und auch die Sterne gleichberechtigte Teile des Ganzen sind'.

<sup>38</sup> It is not clear from Virgil's account which species the poet has in mind: see Mynors *ad loc.* The passage has no Aratean model; for Parthenius or Cicero's *Aratea* as possible sources, see Thomas *ad loc.* and Lyne (1978), pp. 319f. For the myth, see also Callim. *Aet. fr.* 113 Pf. and *Hec. fr.* 90 Hollis; Dionys. *Av.* 2.15; *Ov. Met.* 8.11–151; [Virg.] *Ciris*; Lyne (1978), pp. 5–14; Frentz (1967), pp. 90–3; Forbes Irving (1990), pp. 226–8.

<sup>39</sup> For the idea that the birds' behaviour perpetuates their actions before the transformation, cf. [Virg.] *Ciris* 536f.: *inter sese tristis haliaetos iras | et Ciris memori servant ad saecula fato* ('the sea-eagle and the Ciris are fated to remember their grim hostility and preserve it for ever').



*poenas dat Scylla capillo*, ‘Scylla pays the penalty for the purple lock’, 405): as in the case of Leander and the animals of book 3, the natural bonds of family loyalty and obedience have been overwhelmed by the madness of *amor*.<sup>40</sup>

The prominence of the metamorphosis theme in these lines may alert the reader to the possibility of detecting less explicit allusions elsewhere in the catalogue of weather signs. Metamorphosis myths frequently have an aetiological aspect: peculiarities in an animal’s behaviour are explained by reference to its human origin.<sup>41</sup> The depiction of animals as weather-prophets presents an obvious opportunity for allusion to this tradition; and, though none is as clear-cut as the reference to Nisus and Scylla, several other examples can be plausibly identified. Most of these would almost certainly be missed on a first reading, however learned and alert the reader; I would suggest, however, that the effect is cumulative, and that the very concentration in this passage of references to animals associated with metamorphosis encourages the second-time reader (Servius is a case in point) to pick up the slightest of hints.

The relevant passages are 1.378 (frogs), 388 (the crow), 399 (the halcyon) and 401–3 (the owl). The halcyon (like Nisus and Scylla) is an addition to the Aratean model; and in each of the other cases Virgil introduces an anthropomorphic element which might be interpreted as pointing to the idea that each of the animals was once human. Aratus’ frogs are referred to by the Hesiodic-sounding periphrasis<sup>42</sup> ‘fathers of tadpoles’ (πατέρες γυρίνων, *Phaen.* 948); they ‘call’ from the water when wet weather is on its way. Virgil translates: *veterem in limo ranae cecinere querelam* (‘frogs in the mud have called out their ancient complaint’). Thomas (following Jermyn)<sup>43</sup> interprets this as a learned

<sup>40</sup> Note especially the lioness’ neglect of her cubs (3.245) and Leander’s deafness to his parents’ pleas (262). Virgil does not make it explicit that Scylla’s betrayal was motivated by love, but this version of the story seems to go hand in hand with the metamorphosis (in pre-Hellenistic references to the myth – e.g. Aesch. *Choe.* 613–22 – Scylla is motivated by greed, and there is no transformation; contrast Call. *Hec.* fr. 90 Hollis). For Scylla’s love as unnatural, cf. *Ciris* 259–64; the author seems to hesitate between different interpretations of the metamorphosis itself (punishment or release?): see Lyne (1978), pp. 9f.

<sup>41</sup> This aspect is prominent in the Hellenistic writers: on Nicander and Boios, see Forbes Irving (1990), pp. 19–37.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *Op.* 524, 571 and 778 for similar ‘kennings’.

<sup>43</sup> Thomas *ad loc.*; Jermyn (1951), p. 36. Jermyn suggests that Virgil takes his cue here from Cicero, who introduces at this point in his translation an echo of Aristophanes’ *Frogs* (*Prog.* fr. 4.1 Soubiran ~ *Frogs* 211); the onomatopoeic alliteration of the Virgilian phrase *cecineret querelam* (‘called out their complaint’) is in turn reminiscent of the Aristophanic chorus’ refrain βρεκεκεκέξ.

reference to Old Comedy; but we could also take the frogs' 'ancient complaint' as an allusion to the myth of Latona and the Lycian peasants. As Ovid (*Met.* 6.339–81) tells the story, the peasants refused to allow Latona to drink from a pool where they were gathering rushes; as a punishment for their impiety, they were transformed into frogs, whose croaking recalls their mockery of the goddess.<sup>44</sup> Hence, their cry can be described as 'old';<sup>45</sup> the fact that it is called a 'complaint' also suggests the ill-tempered behaviour of the former peasants, still persisting in their present form.<sup>46</sup>

Apart from the ant and the rainbow (381–3), most of the remaining weather signs are provided by birds. Particularly memorable is the picture in 388f. of the crow<sup>47</sup> stalking on the sea-shore and summoning the rain with its loud cries. In Aratus (949), the crow is described as λακέρυζα, 'chattering'; Virgil substitutes the stronger epithet *improba* ('shameless', 'insatiable'),<sup>48</sup> in part (no doubt) to reinforce the idea that the bird is actually summoning the unwelcome rain, rather than benevolently giving warning. But the adjective also recalls the myth – related by Callimachus in the *Hecale* – that the crow was punished for talking too much.<sup>49</sup> The fragmentary remains of Callimachus' version juxtapose the fate of the crow (spurned by Athene after reporting the disobedience of the daughters of Cecrops) with that of the raven (turned from white to black by Apollo, also as a punishment for tale-

<sup>44</sup> Cf. also Ant. Lib. 35, Serv. *ad loc.* and on 3.431; Frentz (1967), p. 100, Forbes Irving (1990), pp. 313f.

<sup>45</sup> Not merely 'habitual' as Mynors suggests *ad loc.* The use of the adjective in 2.381 (which Mynors invokes to support his reading) is indeed parallel: the context is again aetiological, and the poet is about to trace these *veteres ludi* ('ancient games') to their origins in ancient Athens and among the early Trojan settlers in Italy. Cf. also Ovid, *Met.* 6.318, where the peasants are described as *veteres* . . . *coloni* ('old farmers').

<sup>46</sup> The adjectives *vetus* and *antiquus* ('old', 'ancient') are used in precisely this way by Ovid: the partridge, for example, avoids high places because Perdix is *antiqui* . . . *memor* . . . *casus* ('mindful of his old fall', i.e. the fall that caused his 'death'), *Met.* 8.259; cf. 1.237, 9.320, 11.343 and 13.570.

<sup>47</sup> Or raven (so Mynors *ad loc.*)? As Mynors notes, crows, ravens and jackdaws are not always clearly distinguished, and all three were regarded as weather prophets; the behaviour of Virgil's *comix* combines features of Aratus' κορώνη (strictly, κορώνη = *comix* = crow; cf. OLD s.v.) and κόραξ (= *corvus* = raven) (*Phaen.* 949–53 and 1003).

<sup>48</sup> Cicero (*Prog.* fr. 4.8 Soubiran) uses the more neutral adjective *fusca* ('black').

<sup>49</sup> Compare esp. Callim. *Iamb.* 4, fr. 194.82 Pf., where the crow is described as λαίδρη ('impudent'). The argument for detecting Callimachean allusion here may be strengthened by the fact that Virgil seems to be conflating Aratus with Callimachus in the following lines, 390–2 (cf. *Hec.* fr. 25 Hollis, and see Thomas *ad loc.*).

bearing).<sup>50</sup> It is possible that the owl also had a part to play in the Callimachean story, as the recipient of the crow's cautionary tale;<sup>51</sup> it may be no coincidence, then, that the owl appears in the *Georgics* only a few lines after the crow.<sup>52</sup> Implicitly, the tale-bearing of crow, raven and owl is offered as an explanation for the birds' behaviour as bearers of ill tidings: the 'wicked' crow calls for rain, and the owl's cry is 'vain' (*nequiquam*, 403) when the weather is set fair, implying that it too would prefer to announce bad weather.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, given the context (the reference to the owl falls between the halcyon<sup>54</sup> and Nisus and Scylla), Servius may not be stretching the bounds of plausibility in seeing a reference to the metamorphosis of Nyctimene<sup>55</sup> in these lines: certainly, Virgil 'gives the bird a personality',<sup>56</sup> and the implicit *figura etymologica* in line 402 can be read as an oblique allusion to the mythi-

<sup>50</sup> *Hec.* frs. 70–4 Hollis. In Ovid's closely related version of the story (*Met.* 2.534–632), the crow (here *garrula* . . . *cornix*, 'the chattering crow', 547f.; cf. *corve loquax*, 'talkative raven', 535) has also undergone an earlier metamorphosis from human to bird, in the context of an attempted rape by Poseidon: Hollis (1990), p. 252, suggests that this part of the story may be Ovid's own invention, but perhaps we might rather see him as concretizing hints already present in the Virgilian context (where the characteristic behaviour of other birds is connected with metamorphosis). There is a clear echo of *Geo.* 1.389 in lines 572f., *cum per litora lentis | passibus, ut soleo, summa spatiarer harena* ('as I was pacing with slow steps at the edge of the sand on the sea-shore, as is my wont'; note the strong alliteration): the girl walks on the shore *before* transformation like the (Virgilian) bird *after* transformation. See also Bömer (1969), *ad loc.* and Keith (1992), pp. 29–31.

<sup>51</sup> See Hollis (1990), pp. 225f., Keith (1992), pp. 15f.

<sup>52</sup> Unlike the halcyon and Nisus and Scylla, the owl does appear in Aratus; but the close proximity of the Virgilian crow and owl may still be seen as significant, in view of Virgil's selectivity and his extensive rearrangement of his model.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Jermyn (1951), p. 51 and Thomas *ad loc.*

<sup>54</sup> The halcyon is not mentioned by Aratus; as Mynors suggests *ad loc.*, the name has apparently been substituted for that of some 'little-known sea bird' because of its 'extensive poetical associations' (cf. Jermyn (1951), p. 50). The phrase 'dear to Thetis' (399) echoes Theoc. *Id.* 7.59f., and may recall the well-known story of Alcyone and Ceyx (cf. the parallel phrase in 4.246, *invisa Minervae* . . . *aranea*, 'the spider hateful to Minerva', which more obviously refers to the metamorphosis of Arachne). In Ovid's version (derived, according to ps. Probus, from Nicander (fr. 64); the myth was also handled in Cicero's lost *Alcyones*), both lovers are transformed into birds 'through the pity of the gods' (*Met.* 11.741); the Virgilian phrase may suggest Thetis as the agent of metamorphosis (so Servius, *ad loc.*: *miseratione Thetidis et Luciferi conversi sunt ambo in aves marinas*, 'through the pity of Thetis and Lucifer they were both transformed into sea-birds'). Cf. also 3.338 (with Mynors *ad loc.*) and Frenztz (1967), pp. 86–90. On the myth, see further Forbes Irving (1990), pp. 239f.

<sup>55</sup> For the myth, see Ov. *Met.* 2.589–95 (Ovid has the story told by the crow, immediately after recounting her own metamorphosis), Hyginus, *Fab.* 204; Frenztz (1967), p. 98, Forbes Irving (1990), p. 254. Again, the myth is connected with sexual transgression (Nyctimene committed incest with her father).

<sup>56</sup> Thomas, *ad loc.*

cal heroine's Greek name (*solis . . . occasum servans*, 'watching the sunset', not only suggests the common derivation of *noctua*, 'owl', from *nox*, 'night',<sup>57</sup> but also functions as an etymological gloss on the Greek name, which might be interpreted as 'waiting for night' (νύκτα μένουσα)).<sup>58</sup>

It is also relevant to observe here that both the metamorphosis of the raven and the myth of Minerva's hostility to the crow are rejected by Lucretius: white ravens are an *adynaton* in 2.817–25,<sup>59</sup> and the crow's avoidance of the Acropolis is explained 'scientifically' in 6.749–55. In the latter case, Lucretius also alludes dismissively to the Callimachean account.<sup>60</sup> In a third passage (5.1083–6), both crows and ravens are described (without reference to the myth) as calling for rain; their behaviour is apparently seen here as a *reaction* to changes in the weather:

et partim mutant cum tempestatibus una  
 raucisonos cantus, cornicum ut saecula vetusta  
 corvorumque greges ubi aquam dicuntur et imbris  
 poscere et interdum ventos aurasque vocare.

<sup>57</sup> See Varro *L.L.* 5.76; and cf. Ov. *Met.* 2.564 *noctis avem* ('the bird of night'), with Keith (1992), p. 33. In Ovid's version (2.593–5), the owl's nocturnal habits are explicitly connected with Nyctimene's crime and consequent metamorphosis.

<sup>58</sup> I owe this suggestion to Michael Reeve (*per litteras*).

<sup>59</sup> The expression seems subsequently to have become semi-proverbial, as one of a number of variants on the common expression *rara avis* ('a rare bird'): cf. *Juv.* 7.202 and Otto (1890), s.v. *avis* §2.

<sup>60</sup> 753–5: *usque adeo fugitant non iras Palladis acris* [cf. βαρὺς χόλος αἰὲν Ἀθήνης, *Hec.* fr. 73.12 Hollis] | *pervigili causa, Graium ut cecinere poetae*, | *sed natura loci opus efficit ipsa suapte* ('to such an extent do they flee – not from Pallas' bitter anger [cf. 'the anger of Athena is always grievous', *Hec.* fr. 73.12 Hollis] at their watchfulness, as the Greek poets sang, but in fact the very nature of the place does the job itself'). Cf. Hollis (1990), pp. 31, 232; as Hollis notes, Callimachus, so far as we know, is the only 'Greek poet' to have told the story. It will perhaps be useful at this point to draw together some scattered threads. I have suggested that Virgil, Lucretius and Ovid all allude to the story of the tale-bearing crow and raven as recounted in the *Hecale*. In Ovid's version, both crow and raven undergo metamorphosis, and there is also a reference to the metamorphosis of the owl (possibly responding to the presence of the owl as addressee in the Callimachean version). Lucretius dismisses both the raven's metamorphosis and Minerva's supposed hatred of the crow. Virgil, I suggest, refers back to the Callimachean crow and/or raven (the adjective *improba* would fit either bird equally well, and the behaviour of the Virgilian *comix* is based on both crows and ravens in Aratus); at the same time, his Lucretian language (see below) suggests that the allusion is mediated by Lucretius' rejection of the Callimachean account (to put it another way, Virgil refers back through Lucretius to his Callimachean 'source'). Finally, the parallel treatment of the owl in 402f. may owe something to Callimachus, in whose account the owl was perhaps warned by the crow against tale-bearing; like Ovid, Virgil is perhaps drawing a further implicit link by alluding to the metamorphosis of Nyctimene (the owl, like the raven and – in Ovid's version – the crow, suffers metamorphosis, as well as bearing bad news).

And some of them alter their raucous song according to the weather, like the aged generations of crows and flocks of ravens, when, so it is said, they call for water and rain and sometimes summon winds and breezes.

The idea that the birds are actually *calling for* rain is unusual, and seems to lie behind the Virgilian phrase *plena pluviā vocat improba voce* ('shamelessly summons the rain with full-throated cry', 388).<sup>61</sup> So, too, the development at the end of the catalogue of animal weather signs mirrors the characteristic undercutting effect employed in Lucretius' dismissal of the Callimachean myth: the birds' ability to predict the weather is due not to *rerum fato prudentia maior* ('a more intimate knowledge of things granted them by fate', 416),<sup>62</sup> but to changes in air pressure (cf. *non iras Palladis . . . sed natura loci*, 'not Pallas' anger . . . but the very nature of the place', *DRN* 6.753–5).<sup>63</sup> Once again, Virgil juxtaposes mythological and 'scientific' explanation, without explicitly rejecting either.

Virgil's humanization of the animals and birds throughout the catalogue of weather signs adds a new dimension to Aratus' relatively 'objective' account; in some cases, the attribution of a quasi-human personality to the animals is connected implicitly with the fact that they were once human. As we have seen, the aetiological element implied by the allusions to metamorphosis (animal behaviour reflects the actions of the human character prior to his or her transformation) is in tension with the mechanistic, quasi-Lucretian explanation which the poet provides at the

<sup>61</sup> In other examples cited by Mynors *ad loc.*, the crow/raven prophesies rain rather than actively summoning it (Ovid goes a step further than either Lucretius or Virgil in *Am.* 2.6.34, where the jackdaw seems actually to *cause* the rain). The phrase *voce vocare* is also used by Lucretius, of the cock 'summoning' the dawn in 4.711; and the heavy alliteration in *Geo.* 1.388 gives the line a Lucretian ring. Lucretius' discussion of bird-cries (from which the passage quoted is taken) is also echoed in the preceding lines: note especially the Lucretian formula *variae . . . volucres* ('many kinds of birds') in 383 (cf. *DRN* 5.1078; also 1.589, 2.145, 2.344, 4.1007, 5.801); *certatim* ('vying with each other', 385) is also Lucretian in flavour (adverbs of this form are common in the *DRN*: cf. Bailey (1947), p. 136, and Thomas on *Geo.* 3.485 and 556). Virgil also recalls the Homeric simile (*Il.* 2.459–63) which seems to lie behind the Lucretian passage (cf. Mynors *ad loc.*). Perhaps, too, the fighting gulls in *DRN* 5.1082 recall the original Homeric context; might this have influenced the phrasing of *Geo.* 1.381 (*agmine . . . corvorum*, 'a battalion of ravens', for Aratus' *φύλα κολοιδῶν*, 'tribes of jackdaws', *Phaen.* 963)?

<sup>62</sup> The notion that the crow possesses prophetic powers is commonplace: see e.g. Ap. Rhod. 3.927–39, Nonnus, *Dionys.* 3.97–123, Virg. *Ed.* 9.15, Prop. 4.1.105, Suet. *Dom.* 23; in Hes. *Op.* 747 and Plin. *N.H.* 10.30, the crow's croak is a bad omen. For the raven as prophet (and hence as the bird of Apollo), see e.g. Petron. *Sat.* 122, Stat. *Theb.* 3.506. Clearly, this tradition (and the proverbial garrulity of both crow and raven) lies behind the Callimachean story, in which the crow is a prophet (it foretells the metamorphosis of the raven) as well as a gossip.

<sup>63</sup> On Lucretian vocabulary in this passage (notably the catch-word *divinitus*, 'by divine agency', in 415), see p. 35 above.

end of the catalogue. On a further level, several of the allusions which I have discussed can be connected with the theme of the brutalizing effect of the passions. Nisus and Scylla, Alcyone and Nyctimene were all transformed as a result of excessive, tragic or unnatural love; as I have suggested, their stories can be interpreted as foreshadowing the fuller development in book 3, where the theme of *amor* and its brutalizing power becomes much more prominent and explicit.

On the whole, allusions to metamorphosis elsewhere in the poem are of less obvious significance. Taken individually, such references appear largely decorative, though they might be seen collectively as contributing to the complex of themes which I have been discussing (particularly the blurring of boundaries between the human and animal realms). It is not always easy, for that matter, to distinguish between mythological allusion and simple humanization or personification. In the long run, however, the distinction may be unimportant: the cumulative effect of both personification and references to metamorphosis myths is to emphasize the interconnectedness of the natural world, and the resemblances between plants, animals and man.

It is also noteworthy that the link between *amor* and metamorphosis persists throughout the poem. In addition to the examples already discussed, the myth of Callisto (which has obvious parallels with the Io story) is alluded to twice in book 1,<sup>64</sup> while the hyacinth<sup>65</sup> and narcissus<sup>66</sup> are

<sup>64</sup> In 138, Virgil uses the patronymic *Lycaonis* ('daughter of Lycaon'), and in 246 both Bears are 'afraid to dip themselves in the waters of Ocean'; cf. Ovid's two versions of the Callisto story, in both of which the jealous Juno continues to persecute her rival after the metamorphosis and catasterism by preventing the constellation from setting (*ne puro tinguatur in aequore paelex*, 'so that [Jupiter's] mistress should not dip herself in the pure water', *Met.* 2.530; cf. *Fast.* 2.191f.). Ovid also draws the parallel between Callisto and Io (*Met.* 2.524); see further Forbes Irving (1990), pp. 63–9.

<sup>65</sup> *comam mollis . . . hyacinthi*, 'the foliage/hair of the soft hyacinth', 4.137. The phrasing seems particularly appropriate to the *puer delicatus* (or 'beloved youth'), who regularly has long hair, which is cut and dedicated to a god as a sign of the passage to manhood; *increpitans . . . Zephyros . . . morantis* ('scolding the slow zephyrs', 138) also recalls versions of the myth in which Zephyrus was Apollo's rival for Hyacinthus' affections (Nonnus, *Dion.* 3.153–63, Lucian, *Dial. Deor.* 16, Palaephatus, *De Incred.* 47). The adjective *Oebalius* (here, 'Spartan') which is applied to Tarentum in 125 possibly anticipates the allusion (*pace Mynors*): cf. Ov. *Met.* 10.196, 13.396, *Ib.* 586; Mart. 11.43.8; Val. Fl. 4.294. The Hyacinthus story is referred to by Nicander (*Ther.* 902–6); see also Ov. *Met.* 10.162–219, Forbes Irving (1990), pp. 280f. and Mynors *ad loc.*

<sup>66</sup> *narcissi lacrimam*, 'the tears of the narcissus', 4.160. For the myth, see *Met.* 3.339–510 (esp. 137 for Narcissus' tears), Forbes Irving (1990), p. 282 and Mynors and Thomas *ad loc.* Servius mentions Narcissus, but not Hyacinthus; he also sees an allusion to the very obscure myth of Crocus (cf. Ov. *Met.* 4.283f.) in 182 – but cf. Mynors *ad loc.* While these plant metamorphoses

referred to in book 4 in terms which are perhaps sufficiently anthropomorphic to suggest the related myths. The reference in 3.391–3 to the very obscure myth of Pan and Luna may also be relevant here, if we can accept the explanation offered by *DServius* (Pan deceived Luna by transforming himself<sup>67</sup> into a snow-white sheep).<sup>68</sup> The most prominent and significant instance, however, is the reference to Procne the swallow (*manibus Procne pectus signata cruentis*, ‘Procne, her breast stained by her bloody hands’) in 4.15.<sup>69</sup> The aetiological connexion between the swallow’s red breast and Procne’s infanticide again suggests the notion that the animal’s behaviour reflects the human character’s actions before transformation: the predatory bird continues to attack small and helpless creatures (the bees), though ironically enough she is now protecting her own young (*nidis immitibus*, ‘her pitiless nestlings’, 17). The significance of this passage is deepened, however, by a second reference to the myth towards the end of the book, where the mourning Orpheus is compared to a nightingale:

qualis populea maerens philomela sub umbra  
amissos queritur fetus, quos durus arator  
observans nido implumis detraxit; at illa  
flet noctem, ramoque sedens miserabile carmen  
integrat, et maestis late loca questibus implet. 4.511–15

As a nightingale mourns in the shade of a poplar, lamenting her lost young, which a cruel ploughman has seen unfledged in the nest and

do not really fit the pattern established in book 3, we might see them as keeping the theme of tragic love in the reader’s mind, in preparation for the story of love and loss related in the epyllion. (Ovid, who puts Hyacinthus’ story in the mouth of the bereft Orpheus, may once again be picking up a connexion implicit in his Virgilian model here.) On plant metamorphoses in general, see Frentz (1967), pp. 72–85 and Forbes Irving (1990), pp. 128–38: Frentz raises the possibility that the connexions drawn between various trees and their ‘patron’ gods in the opening section of book 2 might be relevant here; but the consecration of a plant need not be connected with metamorphosis (there is no aetiology, for example, for the fact that the oak is sacred to Jupiter), and even *Servius* in silent here. A stronger case can be made for the significance of Minerva’s hatred of the spider (4.246: the earliest extant allusion to the myth of Arachne, as Mynors notes *ad loc.*; but the story may have appeared in the *Theriaca* of Aemilius Macer, if the anonymous fr. 30 Courtney comes from this work).

<sup>67</sup> Or perhaps merely disguising himself? *Servius*’ phrase is *niveis velleribus se circumdedit*, ‘he covered himself with a snow-white fleece’.

<sup>68</sup> Different versions are, however, recorded by *Servius* and *ps. Probus*: see Mynors *ad loc.*

<sup>69</sup> The story of Procne, Philomela and Tereus is one of the earliest and best attested metamorphosis myths, going back to Homer (*Od.* 19.518–23: see below) and Hesiod (*Op.* 568; fr. 312 M–W); it reaches its definitive form in the fragmentary *Tereus* of Sophocles (frs. 581–95 Radt). For other versions, see Forbes Irving (1990), pp. 248f.; cf. esp. *Ov. Met.* 6.669f. for the aetiological detail of the swallow’s ‘blood-stained’ breast.

stolen; she weeps all night and, sitting on a branch, repeats her pitiful song, filling the area all around with her sad complaint.

The resonances of this simile – both within the text of the poem and with other texts – are complex and thematically important. First, the passage recalls a Homeric simile (*Od.* 19.518–23) in which Penelope compares herself to the nightingale (here called Aedon rather than Philomela) mourning her murdered child.<sup>70</sup> The intertextual link encourages the reader to connect Virgil's nightingale with the mythical Philomela, confirming (if confirmation is needed) the hint already present in the use of the Greek name<sup>71</sup> and in the implicit link with Procne at the beginning of the book. But this nightingale is not a murderess: on the contrary, her young have been taken from her by a *durus arator* ('cruel ploughman'). In this respect, her plight resembles that of the birds in another Homeric simile, *Od.* 16.216–18, in which the weeping of the reunited Odysseus and Telemachus is compared to the cries of vultures whose young have been taken by farmers.<sup>72</sup> But, unlike the vultures of the simile – which might have been expected to threaten the farmers' livestock when fully grown – Virgil's nightingale chicks seem entirely harmless, and the ploughman's act is apparently motivated by pure malice.

Two further layers of allusion help to account for this change of emphasis. The first is again intertextual: the nightingale's laments recall not only those of the Homeric birds, but also Lucretius' mother cow searching for its calf, which has fallen victim to sacrifice:

at mater . . .

omnia convisens oculis loca si queat usquam  
conspicere *amissum fetum*, completque *querelis*  
frondiferum nemus.

DRN 2.357–9

But the mother cow . . . scans the whole area with her gaze in case she can catch sight anywhere of her lost young, and she fills the leafy grove with her complaint.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. esp. δενδρέων ἐν πετάλοισι καθεζομένη ('sitting amongst the leaves of the trees', *Od.* 19.520) with *populea* . . . *sub umbra* and *ramo* . . . *sedens* ('in the shade of a poplar'; 'sitting on a branch', *Geo.* 4.511 and 514), and παῖδ' ὀλοφυρομένη ('mourning her child', *Od.* 19.522) with *amissos queritur fetus* ('lamenting her lost young', *Geo.* 4.512).

<sup>71</sup> The Latin word *hirundo* is used, for example, by Lucretius (3.6), and by Virgil himself in 1.377 (following Varro of Atax), 4.307 and *Aen.* 12.474.

<sup>72</sup> κλαῖον δὲ λιγέως, ἄδινώτερον ἢ τ' οἰωνοί, | φῆναι ἢ αἰγυπτιοὶ γαμψώνυχες, οἷσι τε τέκνα | ἀγρόται ἐξεῖλοντο πάρος πετεηνὰ γενέσθαι [cf. *quos durus arator* . . . *implumis detraxit* ('which a cruel ploughman has stolen, unfledged')] ('they cried shrilly, more than birds – ospreys or vultures with hooked claws – whose young have been taken by farmers before they were fledged'). Cf. Mynors *ad loc.*



As we saw in the previous chapter, this passage amounts to an implicit condemnation of the practice of animal sacrifice: Lucretius invites our sympathy for the suffering of the animal, which is portrayed as an innocent victim of the misguided human desire to propitiate indifferent gods. Similarly, Virgil's nightingale is a victim of apparently purposeless cruelty. Sometimes, however, cruelty may be justifiable and even necessary: this is the implication of the last passage which I want to connect with the nightingale simile, the description in *Georgics* 2 of a tree cut down to clear new plough-land. The cross-reference is suggested by the resemblance between the wood-cutter in the earlier passage (*iratus arator*, 'furious ploughman', 2.207) and the *durus arator* ('cruel ploughman') of book 4: the one deprives the nightingale of her young; the other deprives the birds which nest in the tree of their 'ancient homes' (*antiquas domos*, 2.209). But the first ploughman is 'furious' for a reason: his aggression is directed to productive ends, and the newly-cleared land 'shines under the plough'.<sup>73</sup>

This series of inter- and intratextual links suggests one way of interpreting the pair of references to the myth of Procne and Philomela. On the one hand, the nightingale is portrayed – like Lucretius' calf – as an innocent victim of human aggression. But on the other, the swallow is itself an aggressor, which attacks the vulnerable bees.<sup>74</sup> The allusions to the metamorphosis myth conjure up images of human violence, but also of the violence present in the animal world (Procne and Philomela are appropriately transformed into birds as a result of their inhuman act of infanticide,<sup>75</sup> and are eternally pursued by Tereus in the form of the predatory hoopoe). The farmer can only fight the disorder and violence of the natural world with further violence, like the farmers who take the vultures' young in the Homeric simile, or the ploughman in *Georgics* 2. As we saw in the last chapter, this dilemma is one of the central themes of the poem.

The connexion between passion and metamorphosis is also relevant to the immediate context of the nightingale simile, Orpheus' lament for the lost Eurydice. Orpheus resembles both the nightingale in the simile (on one level, he has been 'deprived' of Eurydice by Aristaeus,<sup>76</sup> whose

<sup>73</sup> For further discussion of this passage, see p. 256 below.

<sup>74</sup> Note that the swallow's young are described as pitiless (*nidis immitibus*, 'pitiless nestlings', 17), aligning them with the *durus arator* ('cruel ploughman') in the nightingale simile.

<sup>75</sup> Forbes Irving (1990), pp. 96–112, points out that bird-metamorphoses are often connected with acts of sexual transgression (especially incest) and the violation of eating taboos (cannibalism); the metamorphosis itself reflects the transgression of boundaries between ordered human civilization and the wild.

<sup>76</sup> For Aristaeus as ploughman, see 327 (*frugum . . . custodia*, 'husbandry of crops') and the references to crops (*messes, sata*) in 329f.

aggressive pursuit was the indirect cause of her death) and the murderous Philomela (he is also partly responsible for her death, because of his fatal backward glance). Like Philomela, he is driven by *amor* to an act of 'madness' (*dementia*, 488); her murder of her child is paralleled by his unwitting condemnation of his beloved to a second death. Of course, Orpheus is not 'brutalized' to the same extent as Philomela and Procne; nevertheless, the simile suggests that he should be seen from one point of view as another exemplar of the destructiveness of passion.

The themes of metamorphosis and of the dehumanizing effect of passion are closely linked throughout the poem: the majority of the myths which I have discussed can be related to the notion (explored in detail in chapter 3) that human rationality and civilization are fragile barriers against the violent and destructive instincts which human beings share with the animals. Implicitly, Virgil reads the myths as symbolic expressions of the brutalizing power of *amor* and other strong emotions. Much the same can be said of the myths of centaurs and other hybrid monsters, which are concentrated in books 2 and 3. We have already seen that the two groups of myths are connected in book 3 through the figure of the centaur Chiron, who is the offspring of the metamorphosed Saturn. Chiron's presence near the end of book 3 (as an emblem of the civilized *artes* defeated by the plague) is also matched by the reference near the end of the previous book to the maddening of his fellow centaurs by Bacchus. Here, too, the context implies a concern with the fragility and precariousness of civilization: the spontaneous bounty of the earth, reflected in the numerous uses to which uncultivated trees can be put, is contrasted with the potentially dangerous effects of the cultivated vine. These dangers are realized in the *exemplum* of the centaurs, already half-man and half-beast, and thus an apt symbol of the ease with which human beings can lose their rationality and surrender to the dangers of excess. The Centauromachy anticipates the portrayal of the relationship between human and animal in book 3: like the wine-induced *furor* ('frenzy') which overcomes the centaurs, *amor* and disease break down the barriers of rationality and civilization which separate men and animals.<sup>77</sup>

The threat of violence and irrationality embodied in the centaurs is also symbolized in the two central books by the prominent image of fire as a destructive natural force. On the literal level, fire is one of the violent

<sup>77</sup> On the Centauromachy, see further pp. 72–5 above.

forces of nature which threaten the farmer's endeavours: the storm which destroys the grain harvest in book 1 is matched in book 2 by a description of a fire in an olive grove (2.303–11).<sup>78</sup> On the metaphorical level, both *amor* and the plague are 'fiery' forces, and the horse's particular susceptibility to both afflictions is implicitly connected with its naturally fiery character.<sup>79</sup> These associations between horses, fire and passion suggest another recuperation of myths rejected by Lucretius, who includes *Diomedis equi spirantis naribus ignem* ('the horses of Diomedes, breathing fire from their nostrils') in the mocking catalogue of monsters supposedly defeated by Hercules in the proem to *DRN* 5, and later scorns the notion that fire-breathing Chimaerae could have existed even in the earliest phases of prehistory.<sup>80</sup> The first of these two passages is recalled at the beginning of the *laudes Italiae*, where the wonders of the East are contrasted with the less exotic marvels of Italy. Here there are no fabulous monsters like those encountered by Jason in Colchis:

haec loca non tauri spirantes naribus ignem  
invertere satis immanis dentibus hydri,  
nec galeis densisque virum seges horruit hastis.      2.140–2

These regions are not ploughed by bulls which breathe fire from their nostrils, for the teeth of a huge snake to be sown, nor does the harvest bristle with men's helmets and ranks of spears.

Initially, the Virgilian passage seems to share the rather sceptical tone of its Lucretian intertext: Lucretius deflates the supposed achievements of Hercules while magnifying the status of his own hero Epicurus; Virgil similarly disparages the supposed wonders of the Orient and eulogizes the less outwardly impressive but more serviceable products of his native land. But the fire-breathing bulls have a more 'realistic' but also more threatening counterpart in the fiery horse of book 3, which snorts as though breathing flame (*volvitur sub naribus ignem*, 'snorts fire from its nostrils', 85). The phrase could be described as a rationalization (the horse only *looks* as though it is breathing fire), but, in view of the complex of imagery just discussed, we could also see the passage as a quasi-allegorical reinterpretation of the myth. Possibly there *are* no horses (or cattle) which literally breathe fire; but the horse still has a metaphorical fire within it,

<sup>78</sup> For correspondences between the two passages, see p. 260 below.

<sup>79</sup> *amor* as a fire: 215, 244, 258, 270f.; disease as a fire: 459, 479, 482, 505, 512, 564–6; horses and fire: 85, 95–100, 119, 271 (*amor*), 512 (plague).

<sup>80</sup> 5.30 and 901–6; cf. also 2.705f. for the Chimaera as an *adynaton*.

which will show its full destructive potential when 'fanned to flame' by *amor* or disease.<sup>81</sup>

A final group of monstrous beings referred to by both Lucretius and Virgil are the Giants. Jupiter's mythical assailants have a rather different role to play in the *DRN* from the other monsters discussed: though gigantic beings tall enough to walk across the sea are dismissed – like the hybrids – as *adynata*,<sup>82</sup> the Giants' bold assault on Olympus also functions as a symbol of the philosopher's defiant stand against religious tradition. We saw earlier how Virgil effectively reverses Lucretius' revaluation of the Gigantomachy myth in his brief description of the eruption of Aetna at the end of book 1.<sup>83</sup> A similar effect is achieved in two further passages earlier in the book; in each case, the Giants are restored to their conventional role as opponents of order and civilization. In 1.184f., the pests which destroy the threshing-floor are 'earth-born monsters', *quae plurima terrae | monstra ferunt*. The phrase would refer more naturally to the earth-born giants,<sup>84</sup> and there is some humour in its application to tiny mice and ants. But as in the case of Saturn's metamorphosis in book 3, humour is combined with thematic significance. The earth is full of destructive forces which undo the order which the farmer tries to impose, as the poet emphasizes in the image of the rower fighting against the current (1.201–3). The equation of these forces with the Giants suggests that the farmer has a moral duty to combat them and to impose order on the world around him; and the parallel between pests and mythical enemies of Jupiter<sup>85</sup> reinforces the close connexion between *labor* and worship which is particularly prominent in book 1. A third, more explicit, reference to the Gigantomachy forms part of Virgil's condensed adaptation of Hesiod's *Days*, 1.276–86, in which the fifth of the month is designated as unlucky because it is the birthday of the Giants. Lines 278–83 rework passages from the *Theogony* and the *Odyssey*,<sup>86</sup> but one

<sup>81</sup> Note especially the image of the 'flame in the marrow' in 258 and 270, which effectively answers Lucretius' rationalistic objection to the idea that any living creature could breathe fire, which 'burns and scorches every species on earth' (5.901–3).

<sup>82</sup> See 1.199–201, 5.913–15. Note also *Gigantum | ora volare* ('giants' faces fly by') in 4.138f., which suggests a rationalizing explanation for the origin of the Gigantomachy myth.

<sup>83</sup> See p. 122 above.

<sup>84</sup> See e.g. [Hom.] *Batr.* 7; Aesch. *P.V.* 351; Hor. *Carm.* 3.4.73; Isid. *Etym.* 11.3.13; and cf. Thomas *ad* 184–5 and 278–9.

<sup>85</sup> We might compare the 'typological' links in the *Aeneid* between Jupiter, Aeneas and Augustus as bringers of order and harmony (see esp. Pöschl (1962), pp. 13–24); Jupiter fights the forces of chaos on a cosmic level, while the farmer fights them on a more mundane level.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Hes. *Th.* 134 and Hom. *Od.* 11.305–20; see further Thomas *ad* 278–83 and 281–3.

phrase seems also to glance pointedly at Lucretius. The Virgilian Otus and Ephialtes are *coniuratos caelum rescindere fratres* ('the brothers who conspired to tear down the heavens', 280), while Lucretius' Giants *praeclarum . . . velint caeli restinguere solem* ('wish to put out the bright sun in heaven', 5.120). But whereas Lucretius represents the assault on heaven as a success (1.75–9), Virgil's Jupiter is emphatically victorious, hurling down the Giants' pile of mountains not once but three times (283). Again, the mood is relatively unserious here,<sup>87</sup> but the passage can be seen as anticipating in a lighter register the grim images of the finale: the eruption of Aetna, with its gigantomachic overtones, suggests a less optimistic outlook on the cosmic struggle between order and disorder. Typhoeus may be temporarily imprisoned, but the periodic eruption of the volcano shows that he may break out again at any time. The imposition of order on disorder, though imperative, can never be final.

In this instance, Virgil has not so much reinterpreted the traditional story, as restored the conventional interpretation, by a process akin to the remythologization discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Where Lucretius celebrates the victory of philosophy over superstition, Virgil seems at first to reassert conventional moral values; but he also calls into question (both through the description of Aetna in the finale and in passages – particularly the spring storm in 316–34 – where Jupiter seems to fight on the side of the chaotic forces which *oppose* the farmer) the notion that violence and disorder can ever be finally transcended.

Recent interpreters of the *Georgics* have tended to see Virgil's numerous mythological allusions as peripheral to the central themes of the poem. Clearly, references to dramatic or romantic stories of love, death, transformation and cosmic conflict serve to diversify and enliven the poet's agricultural subject-matter; they may also function as vehicles for learned allusion in the Alexandrian manner. I hope to have shown, however, that such allusions are much more fully integrated into the thematic structure of the poem, and have a much more central function in the intertextual dialogue with Lucretius and earlier Greek and Roman writers, than has hitherto been recognized. Lucretius' innovative handling of myth demands an equally subtle response: Virgil takes up the challenge by reversing or at least qualifying the rationalism of Lucretius' approach. For Lucretius, myth is essentially false, though it exerts a fascinating appeal

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Klingner (1963), p. 211.

over the reader; its charms can only be safely exploited when its dangers are defused by juxtaposition with Epicurean truth. Virgil's handling of the mythological and allegorical tradition is much more ambiguous: even if myth is not literally true, the stories may adumbrate truths about the workings of a world very different from the mechanistic cosmos of the *DRN*. The 'nature myths' which Lucretius rationalizes may be reinterpreted as illustrations of the mysterious workings of (providential, vengeful or indifferent) gods *through* the natural processes from which Lucretius excludes them; myths of metamorphosis and hybrid monsters may have a symbolic truth, which calls into question the Epicurean faith in the ultimate triumph of reason over passion and superstition. Lucretius hopes with the help of the light of philosophy to dispel the darkness of the mythological world-view;<sup>88</sup> for the poet of the *Georgics*, the real world – like the world of the myths – is a much more mysterious and, perhaps, finally inexplicable place.

<sup>88</sup> See e.g. 1.146–8, 5.82–90, 6.58–91.

## Labor improbus

In the proem to the second book of the *DRN*, the poet pictures himself as looking down, from the well-fortified stronghold of Epicurean truth, on the mass of unenlightened humanity milling around below. With a mixture of scorn and compassion, he decries the vanity of their struggles for wealth and power:

despicere . . . queas alios passimque videre  
errare atque viam palantis quaerere vitae,  
certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,  
noctes atque dies niti praestante labore  
ad summas emergere opes rerumque potiri.      2.9–13

You can look down on others and see them wandering all around, straying in their search for a path through life, as they vie with all their powers, compete for honours and strive night and day with the greatest labour to scale the heights of wealth and power.

The Lucretian picture has much in common with Virgil's condemnation of urban ambition and luxury in 2.495–512, where the corruption of city life is contrasted with the peace and purity enjoyed by the farmer. But whereas in Lucretius' case the word *labor* is associated with the futile and ruinous ambitions of the city-dweller, Virgil's happy farmer is the one subject to toil (*labor* (514)). For the Epicurean, *labor* is incompatible with the peace of mind which is the only valid goal in life (*DRN* 2.16–19); for the idealized farmer depicted in the finale to *Georgics* 2, it is an essential component of his way of life. This striking reversal is not exceptional: *labor* and related words recur in both poems as terms of thematic importance, but whereas Lucretius almost always associates them with the non-Epicurean lifestyle he is criticizing, Virgil sees *labor* as inevitable for the farmer, and for mankind in general under the reign of Jupiter. But what does *labor* mean for Virgil? Is it something negative (toil, suffering,

fruitless struggle) as for Lucretius? Or should we interpret the word in a more positive sense, as referring to the manly, unstinting labour which the Romans so often attributed to the tough countryman?<sup>1</sup> This question has been perhaps the greatest bone of contention between 'optimist' and 'pessimist' critics of the poem. I will argue that neither position is wholly satisfactory: that Virgil is once again juggling with different conceptions, derived both from the literary tradition and from conventional Roman categories of thought.

### *Labor and Roman ideology*

The connotations of the word *labor* for a first-century Roman would naturally not be identical with those suggested by English equivalents such as 'work' or 'toil'. It is therefore important to take into consideration ways in which the word is used by other writers of the period, before focussing more specifically on Lucretius and Virgil.

In his exhaustive study of the concept of *labor* in Roman and early Christian literature, Dieter Lau identifies a range of meanings from 'effort' or 'achievement' (*Anstrengung, Leistung*), through 'toil and hardship' (*Mühsal und Not*) to 'pain, grief or distress' (*Schmerz, Kummer und Beschwerde*).<sup>2</sup> Lau argues, however, that (unlike the Greek *ponos*) the Latin term always carries the implication of an active effort or struggle, whether in the positive sense of industrious application or the negative sense of striving against adverse circumstances. Hence, *labor* is often identified as a virtue, and felt to be an important component of the old Roman way of life, particularly where it is contrasted with modern *luxus* ('luxury') and *desidia* ('idleness').<sup>3</sup> As such, it is associated particularly with agriculture

<sup>1</sup> For these different senses of *labor*, see *OLD*, s.v., §§ 2, 6 and 7. The contrast between active and passive, positive and negative senses is clearer in the case of the verb *laborare*: see *OLD*, s.v. §§ 1 and 2 as against §§ 3–7; *TLL* 7.800.65–804.46 ('fere i.q. contendere, operam dare, curam agere') and 804.47–807.79 ('fere i.q. in angustiis esse, fatigari, periclitare, angere, premi'). In the case of the thematically related word *cura*, *TLL* differentiates clearly between a positive and a negative sense (4.1452.41–1469.64 and 4.1469.65–1475.60 respectively). Cf. also Hauser (1954), who distinguishes between an active sense ('*cura* in der Bedeutung von Sorgfalt und Fürsorge', pp. 1–46) and a passive sense ('*cura* als Bezeichnung des Gemütszustandes der Sorge', pp. 52–88).

<sup>2</sup> Lau (1975), pp. 8–11.

<sup>3</sup> Cicero (*Tusc.* 2.35) draws a distinction between *dolor* (as passive sensation) and *labor* (as mental or physical effort); though the latter may be painful, constant exertion can actually train us to bear pain more easily. For *labor* as a virtue, see e.g. Cic. *Leg. Man.* 29: *virtutes imperatoriae* . . . *labor in negotiis, fortitudo in periculis, industria in agendo* etc. ('the virtues of a commander:



and with military discipline. Both farming and soldiering are widely regarded as hard and strenuous professions,<sup>4</sup> but this kind of toil has made Rome great. Physical slackness and idleness are often associated with moral weakness and social disorder.<sup>5</sup> Above all, the idealized figure of the yeoman farmer, toiling virtuously at the plough and fighting sturdily when called upon to do so, was a cherished stereotype in Republican Rome.<sup>6</sup> The closely related term *cura* is part of the same complex of values: in the active sense 'effort' or 'diligence', it is often associated with such virtues as *diligentia* ('diligence'), *ratio* ('reason') and *consilium* ('prudence'), particularly in the military and agricultural spheres.<sup>7</sup> Both *labor* and *cura* are also seen as essential in the pursuit of *dignitas* ('rank') and *gloria* ('prestige')<sup>8</sup>.

Despite their centrality to the Roman value-system, however, both words can at times have much less positive connotations. Lau tends to emphasize the numerous cases where *labor* is felt to have positive value; but it is not difficult to find instances where it is paired with *miseria* ('wretchedness') or opposed to *gaudia* or *laetitia* ('joy'), denoting grief, anxiety or troublesome business, particularly in contexts (such as the earlier works of Horace) which are influenced by the Epicurean ideal of *ataraxia*. Similarly, the noun *cura* (with which *labor* is often paired) can

assiduity in administration, courage in the face of danger, diligence in action . . .'); *Orat.* 2.150 (*labor* equated with *diligentia* as a virtue essential for the orator); cf. Cic. *Fin.* 2.118 and 5.95, Hor. *Carm.* 4.9.32, Tac. *Hist.* 2.62.1, Pliny, *Paneg.* 3.4 (see also Kristol (1990), p. 137, n. 23 for further references). For modern decadence vs. old-time *labor*, see e.g. Cic. *Cael.* 39–42, *Verr.* 2.2.7, Sall. *Cat.* 2.5, Juv. 6.287–91. Cf. Lau (1975) pp. 26–31 and 97–102.

<sup>4</sup> See Lau (1975), pp. 64–86 and 87–102; Hauser (1954), pp. 7f. and 16–20. Compare Virgil's vignette of the legionary, toiling under the weight of his burden (*patriis acer Romanus in armis | iniusto sub fasce*, 'the Roman soldier, zealous in his country's service, toiling under the oppressive weight of his burden', 3.346f.), with the emphasis he places on the weight of the farmer's *arma* ('weapons', 'implements') in 1.160–4 (*grave robur aratri*, 'the heavy weight of the plough', 162 and especially *iniquo pondere rastris*, 'the oppressive weight of the hoe', 164).

<sup>5</sup> For military discipline as the root of Roman greatness, see e.g. Cic. *Tusc. praef.* 2. For the disastrous results of idleness, see Liv. 23.18.10–16, Tac. *Hist.* 2.93.1, and the passages cited in n. 3 above.

<sup>6</sup> See esp. Cato, *Agric. praef.*, Cic. *Sen.* 55f. and Hor. *Carm.* 3.6.33–44. For a valuable discussion of the 'myth of the peasant patriarch', see Fitzgerald (1996), pp. 391–4; on the link between war and agriculture, see further pp. 242–3 below.

<sup>7</sup> Hauser (1954), pp. 1–6. See also pp. 7f. for *cura* in agriculture (e.g. Varro, *R.R.* 3.9.2, Col. 4.3.4) and 16–20 for *cura* in military matters (e.g. Suet. *Tib.* 18.1, Liv. 3.5.4, 26.51.8, 30.5.5, Tac. *Ann.* 11.18.2). Pliny (*N.H.* 18.19) praises the early Romans for the *cura* and *diligentia* which they dedicated to war and agriculture alike.

<sup>8</sup> Hauser (1954), pp. 14–16; see e.g. Cic. *Brut.* 233, *Ad Att.* 2.24.4, *Ad Fam.* 1.7.9. For *cura* in the political sphere more generally, see Hauser, pp. 29–32.

denote 'anxiety' or 'distress' as well as 'interest' or 'affection'.<sup>9</sup> It is noteworthy that both *Labos* and *Curae* (as well as *Metus*, which, as we shall see below, is a related concept for both Lucretius and Virgil) are amongst the demonic personifications which haunt the entrance to the underworld in *Aeneid* 6.273–81.

This ambiguity is exploited by the elegists, for whom *labor* denotes both the manly labour which elevates the life of love to the level of the 'respectable' lifestyle rejected by the poet, and the suffering he experiences at the hands of his hard-hearted mistress. This double usage reflects a tension which is fundamental to the elegiac genre, whereby love is simultaneously idealized and seen as something painful and humiliating;<sup>10</sup> on the one hand, the elegist expresses pride in his 'alternative' lifestyle: love is not for the idler, it is something just as worth striving for as the more conventional goals of political or military success, if not more so.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, the lover is inevitably condemned to pain and suffering thanks to the conventional fickleness of the elegiac *puella*.<sup>12</sup>

I will argue that a similar tension is present in the *Georgics*. Virgil, like the elegists, exploits the double meaning of the terms *labor* and *cura*. We have seen that *labor* is not always a term of positive value in the writings of Virgil's predecessors and contemporaries; but the concept of toil – particularly in the agricultural and military spheres – is nevertheless a crucial element in Roman writers' estimation of their national character. On both a personal and a social level, perseverance and unremitting effort in the face of difficulties are widely valued. Virgil plays off this inherited system of values against the rather different set of attitudes embodied in

<sup>9</sup> See e.g. Caes. *B.G.* 7.67.4; Cic. *Fam.* 13.7.4, 13.29.2, 15.8; Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.78f., *Carm.* 1.7.17f., 1.9.2f., 2.9.6; Tib. 1.1.3; [Tib.] 3.6.7; Ov. *Tr.* 5.5.47, *Pont.* 2.6.22; Sen. *Ben.* 2.27.2; Mart. 1.15.7f. For the pairing of *labor* and *cura* (in both positive and negative senses), see Lau (1975), p. 33 and n. 206. Cf. also Altevogt (1952), pp. 6–13, Hauser (1954), pp. 52–84, Lau (1975), pp. 32f. and 246–9 (on Propertius and Horace) and Kristol (1990), pp. 90f. Both Lumpe (1977) and Kristol (1990), pp. 22–6 draw attention to the one-sidedness of Lau's account; the latter (pp. 27–42) also looks in detail at Virgil's usage in the *Aeneid*, where *labor* is frequently linked with negative qualifiers such as *infandus* ('unspeakable', 1.597), *insanus* ('mad', 6.135), *incassum* ('in vain', 7.421 and 8.378).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Gale (1997a) for the similar tension inherent in the elegists' use of military imagery.

<sup>11</sup> E.g. Tib. 1.2.33, Prop. 2.24.25–34 (cf. 2.23.7f.), 4.1.137–40, Ov. *A.A.* 2.233–6, 669. On this level, the elegists' use of the terminology of *labor* resembles Lucretius' appropriation of the language of triumph and conquest, discussed in ch. 7 below.

<sup>12</sup> E.g. Prop. 2.17.5–9, where the poet compares his fate to the *labores* of Tantalus and Sisyphus, and continues: *durius in terris nihil est quod vivat amante, nec, modo si sapias, quod minus esse velis* ('no living creature on earth has a harder life than the lover, and there is nothing that a sane man (at least) would not rather be'). Cf. Tib. 1.4.47, [Tib.] 3.4.65, Prop. 1.6.23–6.

the literary tradition, particularly the quietism advocated by Lucretius. As we shall see, Lucretius' devastating critique of his society's most cherished ideals calls into question the desirability of and necessity for such struggles. The avowed object of his poem is to free his disciple from the *labores* of public life and from the *curae* engendered ultimately by our baseless fears of death and the gods.

### *Labor and related terms in Lucretius*

According to Epicurus, the ultimate purpose of all human actions is to attain freedom from physical pain and mental disturbance: τούτου γὰρ χάριν πάντα πράττομεν, ὅπως μήτε ἀλγῶμεν μήτε ταραβῶμεν ('all our actions are carried out for this reason alone, so that we should be free from physical pain and mental disturbance', *Ep. Men.* 128). Lucretius translates this as follows:

nonne videre  
nil aliud sibi naturam latrare, nisi utqui  
corpore seiunctus dolor absit, mente fruatur  
iucundo sensu cura semota metuque? 2.16-19

Don't you see that nature cries out for nothing but this: that the body should be free and exempt from pain, and that the mind should enjoy pleasant sensations, liberated from anxiety and fear?

This ideal of freedom from pain (*dolor*),<sup>13</sup> anxiety (*cura*) and fear (*metus*) is set against the *labores* of the non-Epicurean, which are described in the preceding lines (quoted on p. 143 above), and contrasted less directly with the *labor* of the storm-tossed sailor in the opening lines of the book. At the end of the proem, the same combination of ideas recurs: human life is said to 'toil in darkness' (*omnis . . . in tenebris . . . vita laboret*, 54) as a result of fear of death and of the gods (*metus hominum curaeque sequaces*, 'the fears and anxieties which dog the human mind', 48). These fears can themselves be 'frightened away', but only by the power of *ratio*, not by involvement in the strenuous pursuit of high office or military glory.

<sup>13</sup> Elsewhere in the poem, *dolor* and *labor* are virtually equated: note especially the discussion of the physiological nature of pleasure and pain in 2.963-72, where the pair *dolor/voluptas* ('pain' and 'pleasure', 963-6 and 967f.) is varied by the use of the verb-phrases *laborent* ('they suffer') and *fructum capient dulcedinis almae* ('they pluck the fruit of sweet delight') in 970f. Cf. also 3.366 (the painful sensation of dazzling brightness) and 6.1244 (the symptoms of the plague); the verb *laborare* similarly refers to the effects of wounds or disease in 3.176, 507 and 733.

This complex of ideas recurs many times elsewhere in the poem. The life of the non-Epicurean is characterized by its *labores*. The noun (and the related verb *laborare*) refers both to the futile pursuit of vain goals and to the mental and physical suffering thereby incurred. These mental sufferings, particularly fear of death and of the gods, may also be referred to as *curae* or *metus*. In reality, death and the gods are no more dreadful than the shadows which children fear at night: our terrors can just as easily be dispelled (as Lucretius assures his reader in the repeated passage 1.146–8 = 2.59–61 = 3.91–3 = 6.39–41) by the power of *ratio*.

In the proem to book 3, for example, human ambition is linked to the fear of death (*metus Acheruntis*, ‘fear of Acheron’, in line 37; *fons curarum*, ‘the fount of anxiety’, in 82); this fear is the root cause of the ruinous competition for power and position which leads ultimately to civil war:

denique avarities et honorum caeca cupido  
 quae miseros homines cogunt transcendere finis  
 iuris et interdum socios scelerum atque ministros  
 noctes atque dies niti praestante *labore*  
 ad summas emergere opes, haec vulnera vitae  
 non minimam partem mortis formidine aluntur. 3.59–64

Finally, the greed and blind desire for prestige which force wretched men to transgress the bounds of law and sometimes to act as partners and accomplices in crime, as they strive night and day with the greatest labour to scale the heights of wealth – these ulcers in our lives are nourished to no small extent by the fear of death.

At the end of book 5, *curae*, *labor* and ignorance are again connected, and seen as the underlying causes of aggression and war. This time it is our ignorance of the limits of true pleasure which leads to pointless anxiety and violent competition:

ergo hominum genus incassum frustra *laborat*  
 semper et <in> *curis* consumit inanibus aevum,  
 nimirum quia non cognovit quae sit habendi  
 finis et omnino quoad crescat vera voluptas. 5.1430–3

So human beings labour unceasingly, in vain and to no purpose, and consume their lives in pointless anxiety just because they do not know the limits of possession nor understand at all how far true pleasure can be increased.

The futile passion of love is also a *cura* (4.1060, 1067; cf. 3.994), which causes its victims to 'waste away with toil' (*pereuntque labore*, 4.1121); the lover is like a thirsty man who dreams of drinking, but 'labours in vain' (*frustraue laborat*, 4.1099), since dream-images cannot cure his thirst. Notably, too, each of the three terms (*labor*, *curae*, *metus*) is used to designate one of the 'hellish' emotions which, Lucretius claims, are represented by the traditional stories of sinners punished in the underworld (3.978–1010): the fear of the gods symbolized by Tantalus is designated as *divum metus inanis* ('vain fear of the gods', 982); Tityos stands for the lover, who is 'torn apart by anxiety' (*quem . . . scindunt . . . curae*, 993f.); and Sisyphus is the ambitious man who undertakes 'hard toil' (*durum laborem*, 999) all in vain, since political authority is 'empty' and never finally achieved. The terrors of the underworld in general – Cerberus, the Furies, the infernal darkness, Tartarus – are also 'projections' of the fear of punishment which wrongdoers experience in this life (*metus in vita poenarum*, 1014).<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the *DRN*, then, *labor*, *cura* and *metus* are closely associated with each other, and all three are almost wholly negative in their connotations. This can be clearly observed in the epithets and other collocations of the three terms. *labor* is most often *durus* ('hard') or *magnus* ('great').<sup>15</sup> While these adjectives are not necessarily negative in themselves, they are often combined with – and thus serve to intensify – a sense of failure or futility. The political activities of the Sisyphian office-seeker are both 'hard' and 'empty'. Similarly, in 2.1165, the ploughman's toil seems all the harder because it is wasted (*incassum magnos cecidisse labores*, 'his great labours have come to nothing') on thankless, infertile soil. The adverbs *frustra* and/or *incassum* ('in vain') are also attached to the verb *laborare* in 4.1099 (the lover), 5.1430 (the vanity of unlimited desires) and 6.396 (part of Lucretius' satirical attack on the idea that the gods are responsible for thunder and lightning).

*curae* are likewise largely vain and self-inflicted by the non-Epicurean. They are *inanes* ('empty') in 3.116 and 5.1431, and we are said to feel

<sup>14</sup> Cf. 3.1022 and 5.1151. For detailed discussion of the Lucretian passage and the quasi-allegorical mode of interpretation practised here, see Konstan (1973), pp. 25–7; Gale (1994a), pp. 37f. and 93f.

<sup>15</sup> *durus labor*: 3.999, 5.1272, 5.1359; *magnus labor*: 2.2, 2.1165, 4.958, 5.213 (cf. *praestans labor*, 'surpassing toil', 2.12 = 3.62). In two instances, 2.730 and 3.419, *labor* has the positive epithet *dulcis*, 'sweet', but these are special cases (both refer to the act of composing the poem), and will be discussed below.

them unnecessarily (*frustra*) in 6.33f.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, they destroy the individual's peace of mind, tearing him apart like vultures (3.992–4), pursuing him relentlessly (2.47–53) and oppressing him from all sides (3.1051). Anxiety for the future is a kind of mental disease which *macerat inque metu male habet curisque fatigat* ('torments us and makes us sick with fear, wearing us out with worry', 3.826), and love is 'chill anxiety' (*frigida cura*, 4.1060). *curae* are frequently paired with fears, pain or grief,<sup>17</sup> and are particularly associated with excessive or insatiable desires (3.461, 4.1067; cf. 3.994 and 4.1060 for the inherently insatiable passion of love).

*metus* is especially associated with the two greatest Epicurean bugbears, fear of the gods and fear of death.<sup>18</sup> Like *curae*, it is frequently linked with grief or psychological disturbance.<sup>19</sup> It is described metaphorically as a dark, polluting substance which stains the pleasures of life:

metus ille . . . Acheruntis . . .  
funditus humanam qui vitam turbat ab imo  
omnia suffundens mortis nigrore neque ullam  
esse voluptatem liquidam puramque relinquit. 3.37–40<sup>20</sup>

That fear of Acheron . . . that troubles human life from its lowest  
depths, polluting all things with the blackness of death and leaving  
no pleasure clear and pure.

In reality, these fears are unnecessary and can easily be 'cured': fear of the gods is *metus inanis* ('an empty fear', 3.982), and neither death nor the gods are any more terrible (*metuenda*) than the shadows which frighten children at night (2.56–8 = 3.88–90 = 6.36–8).<sup>21</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Cf. also 3.1049–51: *sollicitam . . . geris cassa formidine mentem | . . . cum | ebrius urgeris multis miser undique curis* ('your mind is plagued by vain fear . . . since you are oppressed on every side, poor drunken wretch, by a multitude of anxieties'). In 5.982, early man's genuine fear of predators is contrasted with the unreal fear of darkness.

<sup>17</sup> *curae* and fear (*formido/metus/timor*): 2.19, 2.46–8, 3.82, 3.461, 3.826, 3.1051, 5.46, 6.645; *curae* and grief or pain (*dolor/luctus*): 3.461, 4.1067.

<sup>18</sup> Gods: 2.623, 3.982, 5.73; death/afterlife: 3.37, 3.903, 3.1022 (and cf. 3.773); gods and death: 2.48–9. *metus* and *metuere* also recur in Lucretius' account of the Athenian plague in the finale to book 6 (1183, 1208 and 1212), where the psychological effects of the disease are portrayed as greatly exacerbating the physical symptoms. (Cf. Commager (1957), Bright (1971), Segal (1990), pp. 228–37.) Throughout book 6, Lucretius emphasizes the frightening nature of the phenomena he is explaining (see esp. 218, 254, 596f., 604, 645): the reason for studying these phenomena is explicitly to dispel these fears by means of *ratio* (6.43–91). Cf. Jope (1989).

<sup>19</sup> *metus* and *luctus/curae/angor/maeror*: 3.461, 826, 903; 6.1183; *metus* as psychological disturbance (analogous to physical illness): 3.141, 152, 461, 826.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. 5.1151: *metus maculat poenarum praemia vitae* ('fear of punishment stains the prizes of life'). In 3.1014–23, the wrongdoer is said to torture himself (*adhibet stimulos torretque flagellis*, 'he goads and lashes himself') with the fear of punishment in this life or the next.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. also *timendum* ('to be feared') in 1.111, 3.41 and 3.866.

All three terms (*labor*, *cura* and *metus*) are opposed to the Epicurean ideals of pleasure and freedom from mental or physical discomfort.<sup>22</sup> In the proem to book 2, as we have seen, the phrase *cura semota metuque* ('liberated from anxiety and fear') is used as an equivalent for the Greek term *ataraxia*, and is opposed to the futile *labores* of the non-Epicurean.<sup>23</sup> In 5.1430–3 (quoted above), vain toil in pursuit of wealth and novelty is opposed to *vera voluptas* ('true pleasure'), and in 3.938–43, the *labores* of life are contrasted with the peace (*secura quies*) of death.<sup>24</sup> Elsewhere, *labor*, *cura* and *metus* are the opposites of *voluptas* ('pleasure'), *laetitia* ('gladness') or *gaudia* ('joys').<sup>25</sup> But, as we have seen, Lucretius emphasizes that these painful emotions are largely vain and self-inflicted, and can easily be 'cured' by the power of reason. *curae*, in particular, are constantly associated with irrationality (*rationis egestas*), which is at the root of superstition and fear of the unknown, and can thus be abolished through the study of Epicurean philosophy.<sup>26</sup>

For Lucretius, then, the concepts of fear, anxiety and toil are closely related, and play an important role in the poet's attack on contemporary society and its values. The non-Epicurean is portrayed as subject to irrational fears and unbounded desires, which involve him in the strenuous but futile pursuit of wealth, power and social position, and prevent him from attaining the peace of mind which is the true goal of all human activity, the supremely pleasurable state. Hence, *labor*, *curae* and *metus* are all negative in their connotations; at the same time, the outlook of the *DRN* is largely optimistic in the sense that painful experiences can easily be avoided by anyone who follows the path of Epicurean discipleship.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup> This opposition is clearly reflected in Dido's moment of 'Epicurean' scepticism in *Aeneid* 4.379f.: *scilicet is superis labor est, ea cura quietos* | *sollicitat* ('I suppose this is the task of the gods above, this is the worry that disturbs their peace'). Dido appeals (anachronistically!) to the Epicurean belief that the gods live in undisturbed peace and do not trouble themselves with the affairs of mortals, in order to ridicule Aeneas' claim to have been visited by Mercury. Cf. Servius *ad loc.*, and Lyne (1994), p. 203, n. 28.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *semotum a curis* ('free from care') in 1.51. <sup>24</sup> Cf. 4.908 for the soothing *quies* of sleep.

<sup>25</sup> *voluptas*: 2.963–72; *laetitia*: 3.116, 141; *gaudia*: 5.1061.

<sup>26</sup> See esp. 5.1207–11 and 5.1430–3. Cf. also 1.151–8, 2.53, 3.82 (cf. *naturae species ratioque*, 'the outward appearance and inner workings of nature', 93), 3.1050–2 (cf. 1071f.), 5.46 (cf. *dictis*, 'by his words', 50), 6.48–91.

<sup>27</sup> Contrast Catto (1986), who argues that Lucretius sees *labor* as a necessary evil, but as one which can be minimized by limiting the scope of one's desires. Her discussion is vitiated, however, by the lack of any clear distinction between different kinds of *labores* (agricultural *labor*; poetic *labor*, the futile *labores* of the non-Epicurean).

illud in his rebus video firmare potesse,  
 usque adeo naturarum vestigia linqui  
 parvula quae nequeat ratio depellere nobis,  
 ut nil impediatur dignam dis degere vitam. 3.319–22

I see in this matter one thing that I can affirm: the traces left behind by our inborn natures, which reason cannot expel, are so slight that nothing prevents us from living a life worthy of the gods.

There is one area of activity, however, where *labor* seems to be regarded in a more positive light. In three places, Lucretius speaks of his own poetic activity in terms of *labor*:

tua me virtus tamen et sperata voluptas  
 suavis amicitiae quemvis efferre laborem  
 suadet et inducit noctes vigilare serenas  
 quaerentem dictis quibus et quo carmine demum  
 clara tuae possim praepandere lumina menti,  
 res quibus occultas penitus convisere possis. 1.140–5

Yet your virtue and the longed-for pleasure of sweet friendship spur me on to undergo any labour and induce me to spend peaceful nights awake, seeking words and verses with which to shed clear light in your mind, so that you can see things deeply hidden.

nunc age dicta meo dulci quaesita labore  
 percipe. 2.730f.

Come now, attend to my words, sought out with sweet labour.

conquisita diu dulcique reperta labore  
 digna tua pergam disponere carmina vita. 3.419f.

I will continue to lay out verses worthy of your noble life, long sought and found out with sweet labour.

In these three instances, *labor* is regarded as something worth while or even desirable; in the last two passages, it is actually experienced as a pleasure (*dulcis*). There are two reasons for this: the poet's *labor*, he claims, is undertaken in the first place for the sake of friendship (1.140f.) – a motive which is entirely acceptable from the Epicurean perspective (hence *voluptas*, 'pleasure', in 140 and *suavis*, 'sweet', in 141)<sup>28</sup> – and

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Ep. K.D. 27–8, V.S. 23 and 78, D.L. 10.118 and 120. The pun on *suavis/suadet* ('sweet'/'spurs on') in 141–2 is also significant, since on the Epicurean view pleasure is the true end of life, and ought to motivate all actions (cf. 2.257f., and note also that Venus, who is *hominum divumque voluptas*, 'pleasure of men and gods', uses her charm to lead on the animals (*inducere*, 1.16 ~ 1.142) and to win over Mars (note *suavis* . . . *loquelas*, 'sweet words', 39)).



secondly in the service of Epicurean truth (1.144f.).<sup>29</sup> In a sense, Lucretius has appropriated the old Roman notion of *labor* as a virtue and reapplied it to the composition of poetry, undertaken for the sake of friendship and truth rather than for the good of the state or for personal advantage.<sup>30</sup> There is not necessarily a contradiction in the claim that poetic *labor* is good while other kinds of *labor* are bad. Nevertheless, the fact that Lucretius employs the term in these two different ways opens up the possibility of a more complex understanding of the nature and meaning of *labor*: if toil is sometimes good and sometimes bad, the clear-cut oppositions which I have been tracing in the *DRN* may be blurred or undermined, and this, I will argue, is precisely what Virgil does in the *Georgics*.

Finally, there is a small cluster of passages in which *labor* is seen as neither positive nor readily avoidable. Significantly, these passages are concerned with agricultural labour. The most important instances are the finale to book 2, where the poet is explaining that the fertility of the ageing earth is in decline, and the anti-teleological argument of book 5; in both places, Lucretius emphasizes the need for constant toil in order to compensate for the decreasing fertility of the soil (*vix nostro grandescunt aucta labore*, '[crops] are now grown with difficulty, in spite of our labours', 2.1160; *usque adeo parcut fetus augentque laborem*, '[the earth] is so chary with her

<sup>29</sup> For philosophizing as a pleasurable activity, see *V.S.* 27. Surviving fragments of Epicurus and Philodemus tend to imply that it is not desirable to devote too much effort to poetic composition. (See especially D.L. 10.120, where Epicurus is reported to have said that the wise man will not compose poetry ἐνεργεῖν – the word should probably be translated as 'energetically', as Asmis (1995) suggests. Cf. also Blank (1995) for the distinction drawn by Philodemus between (acceptable) layman's knowledge of a discipline and (unnecessary) detailed technical knowledge.) Lucretius' emphasis on friendship and on the illumination of his philosophical subject-matter might be seen as a means of justifying the effort involved.

<sup>30</sup> It is crucial that Lucretius' labours occupy *noctes serena* ('peaceful nights', 142); there is an obvious contrast with the *lack* of serenity inherent in the *labores* of the non-Epicurean: compare especially the satirical discussion of common dreams in 4.962–1036, on which see p. 91 above. There is undoubtedly also a reference to the Callimachean ideal of poetic polish: compare Callimachus' praise of Aratus' σύντρονος ἀγρυπνίη ('earnest vigil', *Ep.* 27.4). But Lucretius has combined the quest for elegance and refinement with an emphasis on utility which is entirely foreign to Callimachean poetics. Lau (1975), p. 172, points out that the notion of poetry as *labor* would seem paradoxical to a Roman reader, since poetic composition was conventionally thought of as a recreational, 'non-serious' activity. He also notes that Lucretius is apparently the first Roman poet to apply the term to his own work. We could interpret the passage as another example of 'appropriation': Lucretius has reversed the conventional system of values whereby the pursuit of wealth and social position is considered something worth expending labour on, while poetic composition is not.

produce and demands so much more work', 2.1163; *incassum magnos cecidisse labores*, 'his great labours have come to nothing', 2.1165; *magno quaesita labore*, 'tended with so much labour', 5.213).<sup>31</sup> We have already seen that these two passages are important Virgilian intertexts, and are recalled several times, particularly in *Geo.* 1.<sup>32</sup> Taken out of context, both seem gloomy and resigned: agricultural toil is a necessity, however much we would prefer to avoid it,<sup>33</sup> and Lucretius emphasizes the strenuous but unrewarding effort involved. This negative emphasis is of course tailored to make a larger point: there is a natural explanation for the decline in fertility, which is not the result of divine punishment or fate (as the weary ploughman and vine-dresser in the closing lines of book 2 seem to believe); similarly, the very imperfection of the earth and its unsuitability as a human habitation prove that it was not created by the gods. Viewed in context, then, both passages can be seen to serve Lucretius' avowed purpose of freeing his reader from anxiety and fear; but once again, they open up the possibility of a more complex evaluation of *labor*, particularly in the agricultural sphere.

### *Hesiod's Works and Days and the didactic tradition*

Lucretius' emphasis on the strenuous effort involved in agriculture is not, of course, unusual. On the contrary, the hard-working farmer is something of a stereotype in classical literature. The implications of such a commonplace, however, may be very different for different writers. Lucretius, as we have seen, exploits the idea that agriculture is such a laborious occupation in support of his argument that the earth is in decline and in any case is not a habitat tailor-made for human beings. The infertility of the soil and the other problems which the farmer has to face (pests, weeds, foul weather) are all perfectly natural, and can be explained in rational, scientific terms. Thus, Lucretius' account of agricultural *labor* can be read as a rationalizing or demythologizing reaction to the Hesiodic

<sup>31</sup> Cf. also 1.213 and 5.1359 (where there is perhaps a gently satirical tone: the farmers' willingness to undertake hard labour reflects a (misguided?) belief that strenuous occupations are more manly). 5.1272 may also be relevant here, in view of the emphasis on the agricultural use of metals in this passage.

<sup>32</sup> See p. 64 above, where both passages are quoted in full.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. 5.869, where domestic animals are described as willingly committing themselves to human care: following their natural instinct to pursue pleasure (*pacem* . . . *secuta*, 'in pursuit of peace'), they accept *larga suo sine pabula parta labore* ('plentiful fodder, gained without any labour on their part').

idea that the necessity for work was inflicted on human beings by the gods as a punishment for primordial transgression.<sup>34</sup>

The need to work is of course one of the central themes of the *Works and Days*. The value and significance of agricultural labour are initially established by the series of myths which form the first major section of the poem. Work is seen as a harsh necessity: of the two Erides, the one who 'stirs up the shiftless to toil' is described as praiseworthy and as good for mortals; on the other hand, we are forced to work because Zeus hid man's livelihood as a punishment for Prometheus' theft of fire. Before the advent of Pandora, men lived 'far from ills and harsh toil' (νόσφιν ἄτερ τε κακῶν καὶ ἄτερ χαλεποῖο πόνουιο, 91), and the Golden Race are similarly described as 'far from toil and grief' (νόσφιν ἄτερ τε πόνου καὶ οἰζύος, 113), whereas the present Iron Race is 'never free from toil and grief' (οὐδέ ποτ' ἤμαρ | παύσονται καμάτου καὶ οἰζύος, 176f.). Even in the just city, whose inhabitants enjoy a life comparable in many ways to that of the Golden Race, work is still a necessity: though the earth bears food in plenty, it no longer does so αὐτομάτῃ ('spontaneously').<sup>35</sup>

Work and justice are, indeed, closely connected.<sup>36</sup> The exhortation to Perses to follow justice and abjure violence (274–85) is matched by an exhortation to work (286–326), and the path to virtue is said to be steep and laborious (286–92). Perses is told that if he works hard, not only will hunger hate him, but he will also be loved by the gods, who hate 'idle drones'. There is nothing shameful about toil: *idleness* is disgraceful (311).

Throughout the works section of the poem, Hesiod continues to emphasize the need to work hard and not procrastinate. This part of the poem is introduced with the motto ἔργον ἐπ' ἔργῳ ἐργάζεσθαι ('labour at work upon work', 382), and Perses is repeatedly exhorted to perform various tasks in good time, and warned against idleness.<sup>37</sup>

For Hesiod, then, *erga* have very different connotations from either Lucretian *labores* or the salutary exertions conventionally attributed to the tough Italian peasant by Roman writers. Work is seen, ultimately, as something irksome, as a punishment inflicted on man rather than a virtue

<sup>34</sup> Cf. pp. 61–7 above.

<sup>35</sup> Contrast 237 with 117f.; cf. also μεμηλότα ('which are their care', 231) with ἡσυχοί ('at ease', 119).

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Dètienne (1963), Fontenrose (1974), Heath (1985).

<sup>37</sup> See esp. 397f., 411f., 457–9, 471f., 493–501, 502f., 574–81. Note also ἐργάζηται ('labours') in the final *makarismos* at 826–8.

in itself. On the other hand, it is not only inescapable, but also something that the just man, as a member of the degenerate Iron Race, must accept without slackening; and the farmer who works hard will earn the love of the gods, who will duly reward him with a plentiful harvest.

We have already seen how Hesiod's grim but resigned view is revised by Lucretius. The picture is further complicated by Aratus' version of the myth of ages, which recombines elements from different sections of the *Works and Days*, to produce significantly different emphases.<sup>38</sup> Most striking is the presence of agricultural labour in the Golden Age (*Phaen.* 112f.). Like Hesiod, Aratus associates work closely with justice – in fact, *Dike* ('Justice') is said to join with oxen and ploughs in supplying the Golden Race with all they need. But here, far from being a punishment, work is seen as a component of the ideal life. The details of Aratus' version are closer to the Hesiodic account of the just city (*Op.* 225–37), where crops are abundant, but do not spring up of their own accord.<sup>39</sup> Aratus then follows Hesiod in depicting a gradual decline from this paradisaical state. Ultimately, the men of the Bronze Race are punished for their violence and for the crime of eating the plough-ox, their companion in labour, by forfeiting the companionship of *Dike* altogether. The goddess' departure mirrors the apocalyptic account of the end of the Iron Age in Hesiod, where it is prophesied that *Aidos* and *Nemesis* (the personifications of shame and righteous anger) will finally forsake mankind. But Aratus' goddess does not abandon the human race altogether, since she becomes the constellation Virgo (*Phaen.* 135f.), one of the signs set in the heavens by Zeus to mark the seasons 'so that all things might grow unfailingly' (ὅφρ' ἔμπεδα πάντα φύωνται, 13).

Aratus' version of the myth portrays both the necessity to work and the role of Zeus in a much more positive light than does Hesiod's. Agricultural labour is not a necessary evil, but an ideal, associated with justice and peace. Even in these latter days, when violence and strife have driven Justice from the earth, Zeus still helps out the human race by displaying the constellations and weather signs that are the subjects of Aratus' poem. In line with this revision of the Hesiodic position, it is kindly Zeus, not the ambiguous Eris of the *Works and Days*, who is said

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Solmsen (1966), Johnston (1980), pp. 25–8. On Aratus' providentialism, and connexions with early Stoicism, see (in addition to Solmsen) Lovejoy and Boas (1935), p. 36; Effe (1977), pp. 40–56; Kidd (1997), pp. 10–12; cf. also Reckford (1958).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. esp. 236f. with *Phaen.* 110–13.

to 'stir up the people to work'.<sup>40</sup> So, too, when Aratus is introducing the second part of the poem, he emphasizes the ease with which great profit can be obtained from following his instructions (μόχθος μὲν τ' ὀλίγος, τὸ δὲ μυρίον αὐτίκ' ὄνειαρ, 'the labour is slight, and the benefit manifold', 761).

Virgil's three major predecessors in the didactic tradition each take a very different line in their handling of the concept of labour. Hesiod's insistence that toil is inescapable, however much we would prefer to live a life of ease, is reversed by Aratus. The Stoicized, providential Zeus of the *Phaenomena* helps the farmer in his work, rather than forcing toil upon him as a punishment for the sin of Prometheus. The role of *labor* in Lucretius is different again: it is a punishment which human beings inflict on themselves through their vain fears and misguided desires; and the laboriousness of agricultural production is evidence for the gods' indifference to human beings, not for their hostility or providential care.

Neither the didactic tradition nor the conventional Roman value-system is absolutely clear-cut in its estimation of the importance and value of *labor*; we can nevertheless identify three basic strands of thought underlying Virgil's complex, polyphonic interaction with the work of his predecessors. In conventional Roman eyes, *labor* is valued as an important and paradigmatically Roman virtue: the ability to strive against adversity is what made the old Republican heroes the great men they were, and enabled them to win and preserve the empire. The strenuous effort involved in the cultivation of crops is closely linked with the labours of the soldier and the statesman: toughness, dedication and hard work are seen as qualities essential to success in all three fields.<sup>41</sup> This view conflicts both with the Hesiodic notion that work is inevitable but ultimately undesirable, and with the Lucretian claim that *labor* can be avoided altogether by the enlightened Epicurean disciple. Virgil's insistence on the importance and inescapable necessity of unre-

<sup>40</sup> ὁ δ' ἥπιος ἀνθρώποισι | δεξιὰ σημαίνει, λαοὺς δ' ἐπὶ ἔργον ἐγείρει, | μιμνήσκων βιότοιο ('he graciously shows favourable signs to men, and rouses the people to work, reminding them of their livelihood', *Phaen.* 5–7). Cf. *Op.* 17–20: τὴν δ' ἑτέραν [sc. "Εριν] . . . ἀνδράσι πολλὸν ἀμείνω | ἦτε καὶ ἀπάλαμόν περ ὁμῶς ἐπὶ ἔργον ἔγειρει ('the other [Strife] is much better for men, she who rouses even a shiftless man to work').

<sup>41</sup> The close connexions in Roman thought between soldier and farmer and between soldier and statesman are discussed further in ch. 7 below.

mitting effort is perhaps the one aspect of his poem which enables it fully to qualify for the title *Ascraeum carmen* ('a Hesiodic song').<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, the characteristically Lucretian triad *metus, curae, labores* is also present throughout the *Georgics*, as we shall see. Lucretius links the three terms – all understood in the most negative sense – through the notion of *rationis egestas* ('want of reason'): all three are phantoms which will vanish in the light of true reason. Virgil tends to complicate the picture by combining Lucretian terminology with echoes of the very different conceptions of *labor* embodied in the Roman tradition and in the Greek didactic poets.

Virgil can also be seen to exploit the potential ambiguities in each of these three strands. As we have seen, the value of *labor* is never absolutely unambiguous. The Latin word itself can connote painful and fruitless toil, as well as perseverance and noble achievement. Hesiod's conception of work contains both a positive component (work is closely associated with justice) and a negative component (work is a punishment inflicted on mortals by Zeus); and Aratus' *Phaenomena* presents a more optimistic picture, closer to the Roman ideal, in which agricultural labour appears as a characteristic of the good life. Lucretius, though the most single-minded of the three, nevertheless offers the possibility of a revaluation of *labor*: it may be valid and worth while when exerted in the pursuit and communication of Epicurean truth. Virgil, as we will see, brings out these ambiguities and plays off the three different conceptions against each other, as a means of interrogating the didactic and Roman traditions about man's place in the world, the relationship between gods and mortals, and the possibility or otherwise of attaining true happiness.

*The farmer in the Georgics: labor improbus or segura quies?*<sup>43</sup>

The terms *labor* and *cura* are both of central importance in the *Georgics*, occurring thirty-four and thirty-one times respectively. *metus* is less frequent, occurring only twice (*metuere* eight times); but, as we shall see,

<sup>42</sup> Contrast Farrell (1991), pp. 27–60 and 134–57, who argues that the phrase in fact signals the end of the Hesiodic phase of Virgil's 'allusive program', and that Hesiodic echoes are largely confined to book 1. While it is true that book 1 is the most Hesiodic in tone and language, the *Georgics* arguably continues to engage with Hesiodic *ideas* throughout the four books.

<sup>43</sup> On *labor* in the *Georgics*, see especially Altevogt (1952), Stehle (1974), Lau (1975), pp. 246–53, Loupiac (1992) and the bibliography on the 'aetiology of *labor*' listed in n. 61, p. 12 above.

the contexts in which the word appears tend to point to the Lucretian triad *metus/cura/labor*.<sup>44</sup>

It is noteworthy, too, that the word *labor* appears as a kind of leitmotiv near the beginning of each of the four books. In the first paragraph of detailed instruction in book 1, crop rotation is said to be a *facilis labor* ('easy work', 1.79); by contrast, in the corresponding paragraph of book 2, emphasis is laid on the effort which must be expended in the propagation of trees (*scilicet omnibus est labor impendendus, et omnes | cogendae in sulcum ac multa mercede domandae*, 'certainly, trouble must be taken with all of them; they all have to be forced into furrows and tamed at great cost', 2.61f.). At the beginning of book 3, this phraseology is echoed in the poet's instructions on the selection of breeding-stock (*praecipuum . . . impende laborem*, 'take particular trouble', 3.74). Finally, the task of pulling the wings off king-bees in order to prevent swarming is another easy one: *nec magnus . . . labor*, 'no great labour', 4.106). The chiasmic arrangement of light and heavy tasks in these four passages is striking, and mirrors the ambiguity of the poet's handling of *labor* throughout the *Georgics*, although it is curious that it does not correspond perfectly with the alternation between 'light' and 'dark' books which has so often been seen as the underlying structural principle of the poem.

It is also striking that the programmatic passages at or near the beginning of the even-numbered books both refer to the poem as *labor* (2.39 and 4.6). The two passages hint at a parallel between the labours of the farmer and those of the didactic poet. I postpone to the end of this chapter discussion of the significance of this hint, and the ways in which it relates to Lucretius' valorization of poetic *labor*, since the labours of the georgic poet can be usefully linked to the fruitless quest of Orpheus at the end of the poem.

### Book 1

The central text in book 1 and the poem as a whole is of course the 'aetiology of *labor*' in 1.118–59. The ground is prepared, however, by

<sup>44</sup> Compare the figures for the *DRN*: *labor/laborare* occurs 32 times, *cura* 22 and *metus/metuerere* 32 (averages of one occurrence in every 232 lines, every 337 lines and every 232 lines respectively; averages for Virgil are one occurrence every 64, 71 and 219 lines). It must be admitted that *labor/laborare* and *cura* are also common in the prose agricultural writers, but the (Lucretian) conjunction with *metus/metuerere* is not marked (the verb occurs only twice in Cato, four times in Varro and five in Columella; the noun four times in Columella and not at all in the earlier writers).

means of several references to *curae* and *labores* through the first hundred lines of the poem.

The word *cura* occurs three times in the proem and once in the first didactic paragraph. Initially, the emphasis is on cooperation between man, the gods and the natural world; so the poet's theme of *cura boum* ('the care of cattle', 3) is matched by the concern of the gods and the soon-to-be-deified Octavian for the earth (*tua si tibi Maenala curae*, 'if you care for your beloved Maenalus', 17; *terrarumque velis curam*, '[whether] you wish to care for the land', 26).<sup>45</sup> Once the proem is over, however, the mood begins to darken. The farmer's first *cura* must be to decide what kind of crop his land is suitable for (52f.). At this point, man and nature are still working cooperatively with each other, though the strenuousness of the work has already been hinted at in lines 45f.:<sup>46</sup>

*depresso incipiat iam tum mihi taurus aratro  
ingemere et sulco attritus splendescere vomer.*

Straight away I would have the bull begin to groan at the down-pressed plough and the whetted ploughshare to grow bright in the furrow.

The ensuing discussion of crop-rotation, fertilization and irrigation begins to pile on references to the difficulties which the farmer faces and the labour which must be expended in combating them. The tricolon *urit . . . urit . . . urunt* ('parches . . . parches . . . parch', 77f.), picked up by *adurat* ('scorch') in 93, is emphatic: the farmer must exercise caution if he is to avoid exhausting the soil, and the solution – crop-rotation – is a *labor*, albeit an easy one (79). Hesiodic echoes in lines 92 and 95f. are also significant – both Hesiodic passages are exhortations to hard and timely labour.<sup>47</sup> The build-up culminates in the military language of lines 99 and 104f. and the Homeric echoes in 108–10, which suggest that the farmer is

<sup>45</sup> Mynors opines *ad loc.* that *cura* in 26 suggests the 'sphere of office' of a Roman magistrate; given the frequency with which *cura* means 'cultivation' or 'care' of animals throughout the poem (e.g. 1.216, 1.228, 2.405, 2.415, 3.138, 3.157, 3.404, 4.118), I would suggest that there is also a secondary reference to the new god's (assistance with) cultivation of the land (cf. *miseratus agrestis*, 'taking pity on farmers', in 41, and Aratus' image of *Dike* supplying the wants of the Golden Race (*Phaen.* 113)).

<sup>46</sup> For echoes of Lucretius' gloomy images of agricultural labour and the infertility of the earth here, see p. 59 and n. 3 above. There is a particularly clear parallel between line 46 and the metrically identical *DRN* 5.209.

<sup>47</sup> *Op.* 414 and 300f.



to be seen as a warrior-figure, either 'training' and 'disciplining' the land, or actually fighting against it.<sup>48</sup>

The increasing emphasis on the difficulties facing the farmer leads up to the aetiological digression in 118ff. Even if the farmer follows the poet's advice, 'the labours of men and oxen' may still be annihilated by pests (such as the *improbans anser*, 'the insatiable goose', 119), weeds and shade.<sup>49</sup> The controversial phrase *labor improbus* ('insatiable toil') in 145f. picks up *labores* from 118 and *improbans* from 119, so that the notions of toil and insatiability frame the account of the Golden Age and its end.

The 'aetiology of *labor*' was discussed in some detail in chapter 3.<sup>50</sup> We saw there that the passage is permeated by echoes of Hesiod and Lucretius, and that it is in part the 'dialogue' between intertexts which makes it so difficult to assign an unambiguous meaning to the lines. Lucretian echoes in 118–21 and 133f. already create an ambiguous tone, calling to mind both passages in which Lucretius views agricultural labour as a perpetual struggle to compensate for the earth's decreasing fertility, and others which develop the rather more optimistic notion of progress resulting from human need and ingenuity. The issue is further complicated by echoes of the Hesiodic account of the end of the Golden Age; but, unlike Hesiod's Zeus, Virgil's Jupiter ends the Golden Age not as a punishment but – apparently – as a benefaction, in order to 'sharpen human hearts with *curae*', and prevent them from succumbing to sloth. Virgil draws attention to the ambiguity of the Hesiodic view of work, which is seen now as a punishment (for pre-Promethean man), now as a

<sup>48</sup> On these passages, and the implications of the military and Homeric language, see pp. 252–4 below. On the Homeric echo in the description of the irrigator (which recalls an Iliadic simile, *Il.* 21.257–62), see esp. Thomas *ad loc.*

<sup>49</sup> The danger presented specifically by shade is symbolically important here, given the commonplace connexion between shade and *otium* (leisure). Cf. 2.55f. and 410, with Smith (1965), Stehle (1974) and Halperin (1990). The claim that shade is harmful also recalls the end of the *Eclogues* (10.75f.), where it perhaps suggests the limitations of the pastoral genre.

<sup>50</sup> See pp. 61–7 above (with further bibliography at n. 12). In addition to the Lucretian allusions discussed there, note also the very striking parallel between *Geo.* 1.158 (*heu magnum alterius frustra spectabis acervum*, 'Alas! You will look in vain upon another man's great store') and *DRN* 2.2, (*e terra magnum alterius spectare laborem*, 'to look from dry land upon another man's great labour'). Lucretius' image of escape from the *labores* which afflict the non-Epicurean has become for Virgil a warning *against* shirking one's *labores*. The collocation of *frustra* ('in vain') with *labor(are)* is characteristically Lucretian (see *DRN* 4.1099, 5.1430 (quoted above) and 6.396); in the *Georgics*, however, it is the slacker who is condemned to vain envy of the works of others. (For good discussions of this allusion, see Farrell (1991), pp. 66–8, and Schäfer (1996), pp. 39–44.)

'fact of life', or even a virtue (for the farmer of the Iron Race). There is also a hint at the Aratean revision of Hesiod's account, in which Zeus is providential and virtuous toil is portrayed as one of the positive features of the Golden Age. Finally, the vocabulary suggests Lucretius, for whom 'sharp *curae*' are the woes from which the teaching of Epicurus has enabled man to escape (5.45f.).<sup>51</sup>

The aetiological digression as a whole, then, is in dialogue with a number of intertexts (Hesiod, Aratus, Lucretius), some of whose views are explicitly contradicted, while others are simply juxtaposed. Virgil ultimately leaves it unclear in this passage whether we are to see *labor* as punishment or virtue, the idleness of the Golden Age as a lost ideal or a danger fortunately escaped,<sup>52</sup> the *curae* with which Jupiter 'sharpened' human hearts as gnawing anxieties or as spurs to industriousness and inventiveness.<sup>53</sup>

The tensions set up in the aetiological digression are reinforced by two related passages later in book 1. The section dealing with the threshing floor and the degeneration of nature is linked to the earlier passage by the references to pests (181–6) and by further allusions to the anti-teleological argument of *DRN* 5.<sup>54</sup> The second passage – the spring storm in 316–34 – is linked through the intervention of Jupiter (*pater ipse*, 'the Father himself', in 121, *ipse pater* in 328) and the threat posed to (*hominumque boumque labores* ('work of (men and) oxen') in both cases (118 and 325).

The first of these two passages follows Lucretius quite closely: it begins with a reworking of a Lucretian exhortation, and ends by deploring the

<sup>51</sup> Cf. 3.461, where *curae acres* ('tormenting anxieties') are paired with *luctus* ('grief') and *metus* ('fear'), and described as the psychological equivalents of bodily sickness or pain.

<sup>52</sup> There are precedents for the idea that the idleness of the Golden Age was bad for human beings: cf. Plato *Pol.* 272b–274d, Timotheus fr. 12 Bergk, Strabo 15.1.64. The notion that the gods created hardships as a spur to human progress goes back to Xenophanes (fr. 18 D-K); cf. Cic. *Rep.* 3.1. As Wilkinson (1963) points out, this view is particularly associated with the Stoics: see further p. 62, n. 16 above.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Kristol's interesting discussion ((1990), pp. 125–34) of the ambiguities surrounding the Trojan arrival in Latium in *Aen.* 7. Latinus' realm has parallels with the rule of Saturn (cf. *placidas in pace*, 'tranquil in peace', 7.46 with *placida . . . in pace*, 'in tranquil peace', 8.325) and with the serenity of Lucretius' gods (the phrase *sedes . . . quietas*, 'peaceful dwellings', 1.205 is used of the abodes of the gods in *DRN* 3.18); but terms like *inexitata* and *immobilis* ('undisturbed', 'immoveable', 7.623) suggest a much less positive view of the situation. (There are also passages (e.g. 7.181–6, 601–22, 8.55) which suggest a very different picture of an Italy already riven by war; on these apparent inconsistencies, see further O'Hara (1994).)

<sup>54</sup> Cf. also *tum variae venerē artes* ('then the various arts came into being', 145) with *tum variae inludant pestes* ('then various pests make a mockery [of your efforts]', 181).

degeneration of nature in very Lucretian language.<sup>55</sup> At the same time, however, Virgil can be seen to have modified or even challenged Lucretius' insistence on the power of *ratio* to dispel *curae*. Though the language is Lucretian, Virgil's ancestral *praecepta* are in fact equated with *curae*:

*multaque praeterea tibi possum commemorando  
argumenta fidem dictis corradere nostris*

...

*quod si pigrares paulumve recesseris ab re . . .*

*DRN* 1.400f., 410

I can drum up support for my arguments by setting out for you many further proofs . . . but if you are slow or hang back a little from the matter in hand . . .

*possum multa tibi veterum praecepta referre,  
ni refugis tenuisque piget cognoscere curas.*

*Geo.* 1.176f.

I can report to you many precepts of our ancestors, as long as you do not shrink back and think such slight concerns unworthy of your attention.

The phrase *cognoscere curas* (literally, 'to learn of/discover cares') is a striking oxymoron in Lucretian terms, since *cognoscere* is a favourite Lucretian word for the Epicurean understanding which enables the disciple to attain *ataraxia*.<sup>56</sup> Virgil likewise hails his predecessor in 2.490 as the one who was able to overcome all fears and *rerum cognoscere causas* ('discover the causes of things'). The latter phrase particularly recalls two Lucretian line-endings, *naturam primum studeat cognoscere rerum* ('he would immediately devote himself to discovering the true nature of things', 3.1072) and *nec poterant quibus id fieret cognoscere causis* ('nor could they discover the causes that brought these things about', 5.1185). In both instances, as often elsewhere in the *DRN*,<sup>57</sup> Epicurean *ratio* is opposed to *curae*. In other words, where Lucretius' Epicurean *argumenta* are proposed as a 'cure' for *curae*, Virgil's *praecepta* are themselves *curae*.

A similar reversal can be found in line 197, where the phrase which Virgil uses for agricultural *labor* combines two Lucretian lines, one of which comes from the anti-teleological argument of book 5, while the other refers to the composition of the *DRN* itself:

<sup>55</sup> *DRN* 2.1173f. and esp. 5.206–17. For further details, see p. 82, n. 78 above.

<sup>56</sup> See e.g. 1.921, 2.216, 2.1090, 3.1072, 5.1185, 5.1432, 6.534. <sup>57</sup> See p. 151 above.

et tamen interdum *magno quaesita labore*. *DRN* 5.213

And even so, sometimes [the crops] which we have tended with so much labour . . .

conquisita *diu* dulcique reperta *labore*. *DRN* 3.419

[Verses] long sought and found out with sweet labour.

vidi lecta *diu* et *multo* spectata *labore*. *Geo.* 1.197

I have seen [seeds] chosen carefully and watched over with great labour.

Though the context of the Virgilian line is very similar to the passage in *DRN* 5, the metre and general shape of the line is closer to 3.419; but Lucretius' poetic *labor* has become Virgil's agricultural *labor*. Where the avowed purpose of the *DRN* is to free the reader from care by means of philosophical study (the only kind of *labor* which is really valuable), Virgil's poem teaches *curae* as the only remedy for the inevitable degeneration of the earth and its fruits. In Lucretius, the apparent hostility of our environment is simply natural (*natura sua vi*, 'by the force of nature', 5.206); for Virgil, it is ascribed, more mysteriously, to 'fate' (*fatis*, 199).<sup>58</sup> Doubt is thus cast on the Lucretian claim that we can free ourselves from *labor* and anxiety simply by understanding the true nature of things: the *Georgics* not only implies that *labor* is inescapable, but also hints that human hardship, and the nature of our relationship with the gods and the natural world, may not be susceptible to any straightforward explanation.

In the ecphrasis of the spring thunder-storm (316–34), Jupiter seems to be actively engaged in the capricious destruction of the 'labours of oxen', rather than encouraging human endeavours. But there does seem to be at least a partial solution to the problems of bad weather, suggested by lines 335–40: *hoc metuens caeli mensis et sidera serva . . . in primis venerare deos* ('in fear of this, watch the stars of heaven, month by month . . . above all worship the gods'). The farmer cannot do much about the storm once it has broken; but what he can do is to try to anticipate such storms by observing Jupiter's weather signs, and pray to the gods for help.<sup>59</sup> For our present purposes, the crucial word here is *metuens*. Fear and storms are

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Oksala (1978), p. 77 and n. 31. Here (by contrast with 118ff.) *labor* is treated neither as a punishment nor as a virtue, but simply as an inevitable facet of 'the way things are'.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Batstone (1994).

repeatedly linked by Lucretius, especially in book 6.<sup>60</sup> In his 'syllabus' for the book (6.48–91), Lucretius explains how fear of natural phenomena and failure to understand their causes induce people to fall back into superstitious beliefs and 'adopt cruel masters, whom the poor wretches believe to be omnipotent' (63f.). This does not, of course, bring peace of mind, but merely increases their fear of the gods. Similarly, in his attack on *religio* in book 5, the poet describes how 'races and peoples' are afflicted by fear whenever lightning strikes:

praeterea cui non animus formidine divum  
contrahitur, cui non correpunt membra pavore,  
fulminis horribili cum plaga torrida tellus  
contremit et magnum percurrunt murmura caelum?  
non populi gentesque tremunt, regesque superbi  
corripiunt divum percussi membra timore,  
nequid ob admissum foede dictumve superbe  
poenarum grave sit solvendi tempus adultum? 5.1218–25

Besides, whose heart does not shrink with fear of the gods, who does not cower in panic, when the scorched earth trembles from the terrible blow of the thunderbolt and rumbles run through the great sky? Do not peoples and nations shake with fear, do not proud kings huddle themselves up, pierced through and through by terror of the gods, in case the dread time has come to pay the penalty for some criminal act or arrogant word?

Of course, this fear is illusory: it will be dispelled by a clear understanding of the causes of natural phenomena. For Virgil, though, the fear of both man and beast (*fugere ferae et mortalia corda | per gentis humilis stravit pavor*,<sup>61</sup> 'beasts flee and fearful panic crushes the hearts of all human races', 330f.) is very real: they need to find shelter from the torrential rain and to protect their livelihood. Fear is not futile, but necessary: it is only by anticipating such problems that the farmer can hope to succeed. Unlike the philosopher, who, in Virgil's words, *metus omnis . . . subiecit pedibus* ('has trampled every fear underfoot', 2.491f.), the farmer can never be free from fear or anxiety.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>60</sup> See 4.173; 5.1218–35; 6.48–91, 218, 254.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. *pavore*, 'panic', *DRN* 5.1219.

<sup>62</sup> Cicero (*Tusc.* 4.13) contrasts *metus* ('fearfulness') with *cautio* ('caution'): the latter is seen as a positive quality, while the former is *a ratione aversa* ('irrational'; cf. Dion (1993), pp. 49–53). Virgil's use of the less obviously positive term contributes to the moral ambiguity of his account.

Thus far, the outlook of book 1 is fairly grim: despite Lucretius' claims, the farmer (and mankind in general) can have no untroubled peace, because of the threats of pests, weeds, degeneration and bad weather imposed by Jupiter. It is possible, at least to some extent, to guard against these threats, but *labor* cannot be evaded altogether. Nevertheless, there are also hints of the Roman ethic of success through *labor*, which is at least not seen as a punishment (as it is in Hesiod). There are also short periods of respite, particularly in the 'idle' season of winter. Though there is still work to be done (305–10), there is also time for relaxation and feasting:

frigoribus parto agricolae plerumque fruuntur  
mutuaque inter se laeti convivia curant. 1.300f.

During the cold season, farmers for the most part enjoy their produce and together indulge joyfully in communal feasting.

The farmer here has a brief glimpse, as it were, of the freedom from care reserved for the Epicurean disciple in the proem to *DRN* 2:

cum tamen *inter se* prostrati in gramine molli  
propter aquae rivum sub ramis arboris altae  
non magnis opibus *iucunde* corpora curant,  
praesertim cum tempestas aridet . . . 2.29–32

And yet, stretched out together on the soft grass by a flowing stream under the branches of a tall tree, they indulge themselves pleasantly at no great expense, especially when the weather smiles . . .

Naturally, though, the farmer would not have time to enjoy the fine weather in the busy season of spring, as Lucretius' picnickers do. His respite from care (*curasque resolvit*, 302) can only be temporary.<sup>63</sup> Similarly, song is seen as a consolation but not a cure for *labor*. In his discussion of night work, Virgil describes how the farmer's wife sings at her loom, *longum cantu solata laborem* ('lightening her long labours with song', 293). We might compare the poet's 'peaceful nights', mentioned in *DRN* 1.140–5: though, like the farmer's wife, he is hard at work (*quemvis efferre laborem*, 'to undergo any labour', 141), the song he is composing is more than a consolation, since it is destined to free the reader from the *labores* of the non-Epicurean. Again, then, Virgil casts doubt on Lucretius' claims

<sup>63</sup> Cf. *curaque solutum* ('free from care') in *DRN* 2.46: Lucretius assures us that *ratio* has the power to drive away our anxieties (53), though pomp and splendour do not.

for the power of *ratio*, as embodied in his own poem. Song may console, but it cannot abolish *labor*<sup>64</sup>.

### Book 2

The emphasis on the necessity for unremitting labour continues in book 2, but the harshness of book 1 is now mitigated by a sense of cooperation between man and nature. From the opening invocation onwards, the accent is now on the fruitfulness of the land, which works in collaboration with the gods and the farmer. The three 'praises' which punctuate the book make this particularly clear: the kindly season of spring enables tender young plants to survive; Italy is a land of fruitful soils and moderate climate; the farmer's every need is provided by *iustissima tellus* ('the just earth'). Nevertheless, it gradually becomes clear that this is simply the same world seen in a slightly different light: there are still dangers from pests (371–9) and the weather (419; cf. 310f. and 315–18); and while some plants *do* spring up of their own accord, they are infertile unless grafted or transplanted by the farmer (47–72).

Even where the natural world seems to collaborate with the farmer, then, it still needs to be 'trained' and 'moulded' to his will. Military metaphors are frequent in this book, but now the farmer is more often thought of as an officer 'disciplining' his troops than as a warrior fighting *against* the natural world.<sup>65</sup> This in itself is no easy task: the point is made emphatically with three gerundives in tricolon, 61f.:

scilicet omnibus est labor impendendus, et omnes  
cogendae in sulcum ac multa mercede domandae.<sup>66</sup>

Certainly, trouble must be taken with all of them; they all have to be  
forced into furrows and tamed at great cost.

<sup>64</sup> Thomas (*ad* 293–4) compares Orpheus' attempt to 'console his sick love' (4.464). In this instance, song *is* shown to have great power, since it almost succeeds in persuading the powers of the underworld to release the dead Eurydice; but ultimately, Orpheus' toil is wasted (492), and it is Aristaeus' humble obedience to divine commands which wins out in the end.

<sup>65</sup> See further pp. 255–9 below.

<sup>66</sup> Thomas points out *ad loc.* that gerundives in tricola occur only five times in Virgil, four of which are in this book (61f., 365f., 399f., 418f.). The last two form part of the climactic account of the vine-grower's annual tasks, 397–419 (discussed below). Note also the 'heavy' hoe and 'struggling' plough-oxen in 354–61. Even in the *laudes Italiae*, evidence of *labor* is at hand: note *egregias urbes operumque laborem*, 'splendid cities, built with labour', 155.

The plants themselves must also learn to bear *labores*, though they need to be spared while young and delicate (2.333,<sup>67</sup> 343, 372 and especially 362–70). Trees can be ‘trained’ to cast off their wild ways and obey the will of the farmer (49–52); the vineyard is like an army drawn up in good order for battle (279–87). Nor must the land itself be allowed to lie idle (37, 208), but must be trained to bear whatever crop best suits its ‘strength’ and ‘character’ (*robur, ingenium*, 177). Infertile soils are condemned in terms which suggest moral outrage: salty, bitter soil is *ager ille malus* (‘that bad earth’, 243) and ‘cold’ soil is *sceleratum* (‘wicked’, 256). But excessive fertility is also a persistent danger in this book: the farmer needs to restrain the boisterous, luxuriant growth of his plants and ‘form them by pruning’ (407).<sup>68</sup>

Collaboration between man and the earth, then, necessitates *labores* for both; and though the gods are largely benevolent in this book, they are still to be feared and placated. This theme reaches its climax in 397–419, where the poet sums up the never-ending labour of the viticultural year. The key words *labor*, *cura* and *metus* pile up relentlessly in this short passage,<sup>69</sup> and the emphasis is increased by two sets of gerundives (399f. and 418f.), by two examples of anaphora (*primus . . . primus . . . primus*, ‘first . . . first . . . first’, in 408f. and *bis . . . bis*, ‘twice . . . twice’, in 410f.), and by the neat reversal of a Hesiodic motto in 412f.<sup>70</sup> There are also, once again, distant echoes of the anti-teleological passage of Lucretius 5. Though these are not as clear-cut as in the passages we looked at in book 1, the Lucretian argument should by now be so firmly fixed in the reader’s mind that even a passing similarity may be enough to bring it to the surface. The opening words *est etiam* (‘there is also’) are Lucretian in tone (the formula is used several times in the *DRN* to introduce additional instances or alternative explanations);<sup>71</sup> and there are hints of *DRN* 5 in the phrasing of 399f. and especially 411:

<sup>67</sup> Contrast 419: the young vines may not need to fear heavy rain in spring (though 1.313 offers a rather different view), but it is a serious danger to the mature grapes.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. 47–52, 251–3 and 367–70. The harm caused by shade is also a recurring theme: see 53–6 and 410. Cf. Smith (1965), Stehle (1974).

<sup>69</sup> *labor* occurs three times (397, 401 and 412), *cura* twice (405, 415; cf. also *curandis*, ‘in cultivating’, 397); *metuendus* (‘to be feared’) in the final line is particularly emphatic, owing to the striking alliteration and assonance.

<sup>70</sup> *Op.* 643. Hesiod’s aphorism underlines the undesirability of navigation: if one must sail, better to be as safe as possible by using a large ship. Virgil’s pointed reversal of Hesiod’s terms serves to underline still further the labour involved in viticulture: a small farm is better, because less work.

<sup>71</sup> E.g. 3.288 and 292, 5.517, 6.132, 295, 786. The phrase is almost always placed at the beginning of the line; it recurs only twice in Virgil, both instances in the *Georgics* (3.425 and 4.271).



quod superest arvi, tamen id natura sua vi  
*sentibus obducat*, nī vis humana resistat  
 vitai causa valido consueta *bidenti*  
 ingemere et terram pressis *proscindere* aratris.  
 si non fecundas *vertentes* vomere *glebas*  
*terraique solum* subigentes cimus ad ortus,  
 sponte sua nequeant liquidas exsistere in auras.

DRN 5.206–12

As for the lands that remain, even these would be covered with brambles by the force of nature if human strength did not resist her, well used as we are to groaning over the sturdy mattock for our livelihood and furrowing the earth by pressure of the plough. If we did not encourage them to grow by turning over the rich clods with the ploughshare and subduing the soil of the earth, plants could not spring up of their own accord into the clear air.

*terque quaterque solum scindendum glaebaeque versis*  
*aeternum frangenda bidentibus . . .*

. . .

bis segetem densis *obducunt sentibus* herbae.

Geo. 2.399f., 411

Three or four times the earth must be furrowed and the clods continually broken up with an upturned hoe . . . weeds cover the crop twice a year with thick brambles.

Once again, these echoes throw into relief the strikingly un-Lucretian conclusion, *et iam maturis metuendus Iuppiter uvis* ('now, too, when the grapes are ripe, Jupiter [i.e. rain] is to be feared'). As Mynors notes, the line recalls Jupiter's role in the spring storm in book 1, and, as in the earlier passage, Virgil implies that fear of the gods is not something we can lightly cast aside. The gerundive is particularly striking, since it expresses the precise opposite of a recurrent Lucretian motto: the things that we are afraid of are really *no more to be feared* than the darkness which scares children at night (*timemus | interdum, nilo quae sunt metuenda magis quam | quae pueri in tenebris pavitant*, 2.56–8 = 3.88–90 = 6.36–8).<sup>72</sup>

Of course, as several commentators have pointed out, the insistence on the need for unrelenting toil in this passage also contrasts sharply with the brief treatment of the olive, which 'needs no cultivation' (420). This striking juxtaposition forms the climax of a kind of dialectic between the

<sup>72</sup> The gerundive *timendum* ('to be feared') also occurs three times in similar contexts (1.111, 3.41 and 3.866).

themes of natural fertility and the need for human cultivation which runs through the book. So too fruit trees, once mature, 'need no help from us' (428), and, more surprisingly, the book concludes with lines in praise of uncultivated trees, in some ways superior even to the vine which has cost the farmer so much toil.

This last passage is one of the hardest to disentangle in the whole poem. Is the poet really suggesting that wild or half-wild plants are superior to those which are so lovingly 'trained' by the farmer? There are certainly features of the passage which seem to hint as much. The olive, as the plant of peace, contrasts strikingly with the violence of the Centauromachy, which is blamed on the ill-effects of wine. Virgil describes it as *placitam Paci* ('beloved of Peace'), a phrase which recalls the Lucretian ideal of godlike *ataraxia* (*placida pax*, 'tranquil peace', in *DRN* 6.73).<sup>73</sup> The fruit trees in line 428 also recall the blessed self-sufficiency of the Epicurean gods, and there are hints of the Golden Age in the language of 423, 430 and 439.<sup>74</sup> On the other hand, it seems ironic that these same uncultivated trees provide wood for ships and weapons, as well as wagons and house-building. Line 433 (if genuine)<sup>75</sup> also suggests that we should take nature's bounty as an *encouragement* to devote ourselves to our own *curae*, not as devaluing human endeavour.

Here, then, both wild and cultivated crops are connected with violence, and the peaceful olive is played off against the spears and bows constructed from myrtle, cornel and yew, as well as the *furor* of the

<sup>73</sup> Cf. also 1.40. There may be a further echo of Lucretius in 437–9: the repeated *iuvat* ('it pleases me') recalls both the poetic programme which forms the proem to *DRN* 4 (4.2f. = 1.927f.) and the anaphora *suave . . . suave* ('sweet . . . sweet'; note also *spectare*, 'to look on', *DRN* 2.2 and *Geo.* 2.437, and the metaphorical *undantem*, 'billowing', which picks up Lucretius' storm imagery) in the priamel at the beginning of book 2. The latter context is particularly relevant here, since Lucretius' point is that it is pleasant to look on the *labores* of others, without any anxieties on one's own behalf (cf. *hominum non ulli obnoxia curae*, 'owing nothing to human care').

<sup>74</sup> Cf. *opisque haud indiga nostrae* ('needing no help from us', 428) with *ipsa suis pollens opibus, nil indiga nostri* ('secure in their own resources, needing nothing from us', *DRN* 2.650, of the Epicurean gods); as Thomas notes *ad loc.*, the parallel is particularly striking in view of the rarity of the word *indigus*. Golden Age imagery: cf. *ipsa satis tellus* ('the earth itself [gives] enough', 423) with 1.127f., *sanguineisque inculta rubent aviaria bacis* ('and the uncultivated woodlands are ruddy with blood-red berries', 430) with *Ed.* 4.29, and *non rastris . . . obnoxia* ('owing nothing to the hoe', 439) with *Ed.* 4.40.

<sup>75</sup> Thomas regards it as an interpolation. Though the line is omitted in the Medicean MS, Thomas' main objection is that 'the thought has no place whatever in the sequence begun at 420 and continuing through to 457 and beyond'. If, however, the 'sequence' which Thomas has in mind is in any case complex and ambiguous in its evaluation of uncultivated nature, it will not be necessary to eject the line. (Cf. also Mynors *ad loc.*)

wine-maddened Centaurs. The Golden Age imagery and the language of Lucretian detachment is also in tension with the notion that the fertility of nature should be an incentive to work.

These tensions continue into the finale: here, the 'happy farmer' is portrayed as a kind of remnant of the Golden Age, but one who nevertheless needs to work; the 'life of golden Saturn' is said both to have preceded the advent of war and to have been the foundation for the greatness of modern Rome and her empire; and Lucretius' conquest of fear and fate is juxtaposed with the farmer's piety and honest toil.<sup>76</sup> Particularly striking from our point of view is the apparent contradiction between *facilem victum* ('an easy livelihood', 460) and *sponte sua* ('of its own accord', 501), *secura quies* ('untroubled peace', 467) and *otia* ('leisure', 468) on the one hand, and *anni labor* ('annual labour', 514) and *nec requies* ('without rest', 516) on the other. The philosophical poet's subjugation of *metus* (491) also seems incompatible with the religious language used in lines 473, 493f. and 527–9, not to mention the earlier claim that *metus* is necessary in the cultivation of the vine.

The whole finale evokes a complex network of Lucretian intertexts, which were discussed in detail in chapter 2.<sup>77</sup> In particular, the moralizing synkrisis between city and country recalls the proems to *DRN* 2 and 3 and Lucretius' demythologized version of the Golden Age in 5.925–1010. Virgil combines something of the idealism of the first two passages

<sup>76</sup> On these tensions, see esp. Barchiesi (1982) and Hardie (1986), pp. 33–51. Clay (1976) attempts to resolve the problem by distinguishing between two different conceptions of rustic life, the poetic and the agricultural, and suggests that the poet (identified with the *fortunatus* of line 493) sees himself as mediating between the obscurities of philosophical truth and the realities of agricultural toil. Certainly, different conceptions are juxtaposed here, but the boundaries are not as clear as Clay suggests: *facilem victum* ('an easy livelihood', 460) is directly attributed to the farmer, and it is certainly most natural to take *secura quies* ('untroubled peace') in 467 as picking up *quibus* [sc. *agricolis*] ('for whom [sc. for farmers]') in 459. So too the context initially suggests that the subject of 493f. is the poet who writes of rural life; but the distinction between poet and farmer is rapidly blurred in the succeeding lines, leading up to the explicit reference to the farmer in 513. Cf. also O'Loughlin (1978), pp. 61–8, who discusses the passage in terms of a 'dialectical interplay of means [hard work] and ends [rustic leisure and *secura quies*]', and Segal (1970b), who detects similar tensions in Catullus' evaluation of *otium* in poems 50 and 51.

<sup>77</sup> See pp. 38–43 and n. 66 above. In addition to the parallels noted there, cf. *fundit . . . victum . . . tellus* ('the . . . earth pours forth a . . . livelihood', 460) with *tellus animalia fudit* ('earth brought forth animals', *DRN* 5.917); Virgil's reference of 'iron laws' in 501 also suggests a less than wholly positive view of the legal system analogous to that outlined in *DRN* 5.1143–60.

(where Lucretius stresses the futility of financial greed and political ambition, and the ease with which *ataraxia* can be attained) with the realism of the third (where the focus is on the hardship and imperfection of primitive life); the tension resulting from this conflation goes some way towards explaining the ambiguity of Virgil's presentation of rustic life. Virgil's farmer is a model of self-sufficiency and contentment with little: like Lucretius' primitives, he lives on the simple fare which the earth 'offers' him and does not hanker after luxuries. But like those primitives also, his life is not a perfect existence, free from all care and toil. Though in some ways it resembles the Golden Age, this is no earthly paradise.

In another sense, Virgil has combined elements which are incompatible in Lucretius' world. As is clear from the finale to *DRN* 2, spontaneous production of food is firmly relegated to the past, and agricultural *labor* had become necessary as a result. Virgil has not only juxtaposed the two, but has also attributed *secura quies* ('untroubled peace') to his farmer (467).<sup>78</sup> With the sole exception of poetic composition, *labor* is for Lucretius incompatible with (*re*)*quies*, which is used to refer to the peace of the philosopher, the gods, sleep or death.<sup>79</sup> In 3.939, the *secura quies* of death is specifically opposed to the *labor* of life (943). Yet the Virgilian farmer's *quies* paradoxically coexists with ceaseless activity: he has *quies* ('peace') but no *requies* ('rest'). *nec requies* ('without rest', 516) is also a Lucretian phrase, applied to the ceaseless motion of the atoms in 4.227 and 6.933.<sup>80</sup> Yet again, then, Virgil can be seen to challenge Lucretius' easy assurance that salvation is readily available to all. In a universe which (as Lucretius admits) is always on the move, in a world which is gradually falling apart, does it make sense to attribute *requies* to (enlightened) human beings alone? The self-sufficiency of Virgil's farmer is something

<sup>78</sup> Hardie (1986), p. 34, n. 3, suggests that the phrase *nescia fallere vita* ('a life ignorant of trickery') also plays on the Epicurean catch-phrase 'live unknown' (λάθε βιώσας: the two Greek words correspond to the Latin *fallere*, 'to trick/escape notice', and *vita*, 'life', though of course the sense is different).

<sup>79</sup> 3.18, 5.168, 6.73 (gods); 4.454, 848, 907, 991, 5.983 (sleep, especially as a release from the *curae* of waking life); 3.211, 910, 939, 1038 (the peace of death – twice given the epithet *secura*); 5.1129 (peaceful obscurity opposed to ambition); 6.94 (Calliope, as *requies hominum divumque voluptas*, 'peace of mortal men and pleasure of the gods'). The gods are also said to lead a *securum aevum* ('a carefree life', 5.82 = 6.58). Contrast the restlessness of the non-Epicurean depicted in 2.9–13 and 3.1057–67 (also the plague-victims in 6.1178).

<sup>80</sup> Cf. *requies* . . . *nullast* ('there is no rest', 1.996f.), *nulla quies est* ('there is no peace', 2.95). On the paradoxical resemblance between the blind wanderings of the atom and those of the non-Epicurean, see Gale (1994a), p. 118 and n. 71.

not altogether different from Lucretian *ataraxia*, but it is less perfect, not absolutely free from care, and always subject to real threats, against which constant vigilance must be maintained.

In the finale to book 2, then, the Lucretian ideal of *ataraxia*, of freedom from *curae* and *metus*, is played off against something like the traditional Roman stereotype of the honest, hard-working farmer. At this point, Virgil strikes a kind of compromise, though tensions run through the passage as through the whole of book 2. In the third book, however, both ideals are further problematized.

### Book 3

In the third book, the relationship between domestic animals and their human keepers is characterized by *curae* and *labores* of two distinct kinds. On one level, the farmer is portrayed as fully in control of his animals: he should choose the best specimens for breeding, rejecting the old or imperfect (95–100, 386–90); ‘enslave’ the young animals and subdue them to his own purposes (163–73, esp. *servitio*, ‘slavery’, 168); and not shrink from killing an individual to save the flock (464–9). But animal husbandry also has its gentler side, since flocks and herds – particularly the smaller animals, the ‘tender flock’ dealt with in the second part of the book – are portrayed as vulnerable and dependent on man, who must protect them against cold, thorny undergrowth, poisonous snakes and disease.<sup>81</sup> On this level, the word *cura*, which recurs as a kind of leitmotiv at points of transition from one topic to another, refers to the care and attention which the farmer must devote to maintaining the health and good management of his flocks and herds.<sup>82</sup> But on another level, the animals themselves are subject to *labores* and *curae*, and here both words tend to take on much more negative connotations.<sup>83</sup> In these contexts, too, the boundary between man and beast (which is emphasized where

<sup>81</sup> On these contrasting aspects of the relationship between man and animal, and Lucretian precedents, see Gale (1991), esp. pp. 425f., and ch. 3 above.

<sup>82</sup> See 124, 138, 157 (horses and cattle), 305, 319 (goats), 384 (sheep/wool) and 404 (dogs). Cf. also 74 and 118, where *labor* denotes the care required in the choice of stud-horses, and *industria* (‘pains’) in 209.

<sup>83</sup> Contrast *DRN* 5.869: for Lucretius, domestic (as opposed to wild) animals are free from the *labor* of finding food for themselves; their fodder is given to them as a ‘reward’ for their ‘usefulness’ to human beings. In both Lucretius and Virgil, there is a kind of partnership between man and animals; but the utilitarianism of Lucretius’ account is replaced in the *Georgics* by something more like an emotional bond, based on common subjection to disease, *amor* and mortality.

the hierarchical relationship between vulnerable animal and human 'guardian' is to the fore) tends to become blurred or even erased.<sup>84</sup> Sometimes the animals seem to share cooperatively in the farmer's or trainer's efforts: the horse, in particular, is as keenly desirous of victory as its rider (112), and training is a *labor* for the animal as well as the farmer (182).<sup>85</sup> But more often, the animal's *labores* are fruitless or misdirected: in these cases, the word connotes suffering rather than achievement, and it is notable that these pains are shared by man and beast. In lines 66–8, most strikingly, the poet suddenly generalizes from the need to select young animals for breeding to the brevity of youth, which soon gives way to age and sickness, for 'wretched mortal creatures' in general; elsewhere (97 and 127), animals are said to undergo *labor* in the process of mating.<sup>86</sup> Links are thus established between *labor* and *amor* and between *labor* and disease: these associations clearly lead up to the twin climaxes of the book, the attack on *amor* and the plague.

The link between *labor* and *amor*, established in lines 97 and 127, has strong Lucretian overtones. In the first case, the old horse is described as facing the 'effort' of mating 'in vain' (*frustra*): though this refers specifically to the animal's impotence, the collocation strongly recalls Lucretius' insistence of the vanity of the lover's pursuit of empty images.<sup>87</sup> In the second case, the bold oxymoron *blando . . . labori* ('delightful toil'), together with *voluptas sollicitat* ('pleasure agitates them') a few lines later,

<sup>84</sup> For the interplay between these levels in book 2, see Putnam (1979), pp. 129–32. On anthropomorphism in book 3, see esp. Liebeschuetz (1965), Wilkinson (1969), pp. 121–32; Putnam (1979), pp. 174–201; Miles (1975); Gale (1991); Schäfer (1996), pp. 99–100.

<sup>85</sup> Note also the curious phrase *sitque laboranti similis* ('let it seem to be toiling'), of the fully trained horse in 193. Traina (1969) traces the history of the Virgilian phrase back to the Homeric *ἐοικώς* ('like'), used in comparisons as an alternative to *ὥς* ('as'), and notes that before Virgil such expressions are used mainly in ecphrases of works of art. Here, then, the horse is represented as the finished product – so to speak – of the farmer's labours. But it will become clear later in the book that the farmer's mastery of his 'material' is only partial. Compare the tension between Callimachean artistry and Dionysiac inspiration in 3.284–94, discussed on pp. 191–2 below.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. also *cura* in 229: under the influence of *amor*, the bull's *cura* is channelled into aggression and sexual jealousy, virtually the opposite of the creative, nurturing *cura* of the farmer.

<sup>87</sup> See esp. 4.1099, *frustra que laborat* ('he toils in vain'). Lucretius compares the lover to a dreamer who attempts to drink, but is deceived by images; Virgil's horse is like a fire in a stubble-field, 'raging in vain' (100). The similes are surely not unrelated. The phrase *ad proelia* ('[comes] to grips'), though commonplace in love-poetry (as Thomas notes *ad loc.*), might also be compared with Lucretius' *ad arma* ('for the combat', 5.1076), used in the context of a discussion of animal cries – though Lucretius is contrasting the noises a horse makes when sexually aroused and when eager for battle.

condenses the Lucretian ideas that love is fruitless and painful, but also has its pleasures (purer, however, in the case of sexual partners who are not in love):

sed leviter poenas frangit Venus inter amorem  
*blanda*que refrenat morsus admixta *voluptas*.

DRN 4.1084f.<sup>88</sup>

But Venus lightly tempers their torture in the act of love and blends it with delightful pleasure that relieves its sting.

In transferring the Lucretian vocabulary from human lovers to animals, however, Virgil has brought together two aspects of sexual behaviour which Lucretius had claimed to be separable: love and reproduction. For Lucretius, sexual pleasure is real, and sexual attraction (particularly amongst animals, uncorrupted by the follies of human lovers) is a powerful force, which is obviously necessary for the continuity of the species. As such, *blandus amor* ('delightful love') is celebrated in the proem, in the person of Venus, who instils desire in the hearts of animals, 'so that they eagerly reproduce their kind' (1.20). In book 4, too, the attack on *amor* is followed by a discussion of reproduction and heredity, which is entirely free of the virulence of the preceding diatribe. It is here that Lucretius develops the agricultural metaphor echoed by Virgil in 135–7:

nam mulier prohibet se concipere atque repugnat,  
 clunibus ipsa viri Venerem si laeta retractat  
 atque exossato ciet omni pectore fluctus;  
 eicit enim sulcum recta regione viaque  
 vomeris atque locis avertit seminis ictum.

1269–73

For the woman prevents herself from conceiving and fights against it if in her delight she thrusts away from her partner's manhood with her buttocks and moves her whole body limply in sinuous motions; by doing this, she diverts the furrow from its straight course and throws the ploughshare out of line so that the seed goes astray.

The image is introduced not only for euphemistic reasons, but also to underline what is for Lucretius a 'scientific' analogy between human

<sup>88</sup> Cf. also *blanda voluptas* ('delightful pleasure', 1263) and *pereunt . . . labore* ('they are worn out with toil', 1121, perhaps echoed in Virgil's *ne blando nequeat supresse labori*, 'in case they should be unable to endure the delightful toil'). The general idea of mingled pleasure and pain is also present in 1133f. and 1201f.

reproduction and agriculture. Like any other kind of seed, human semen has to land in an appropriate place if it is to 'germinate'.<sup>89</sup> In Virgil's case, the metaphor draws attention to the continuity of theme from the previous books: like the soils of books 1 and 2, the animals must be carefully prepared if they are to yield a good 'harvest'. But horses and cattle, still more than the (personified) crops and trees, are subject to passion and emotion in their own right. Reproduction is not an innocent, mechanical process, since animals, too, are subject to the *labores* experienced only by the deluded human lover in Lucretius' poem.

This theme comes to a head in the central digression on the power of *amor*, where any distinction between human and animal has virtually disappeared.<sup>90</sup> Not only are the battling bulls in 219–41 depicted in highly anthropomorphic terms, but the poet tells us explicitly in 242–4 that *amor* is the same for all – men, animals, fish and birds. All behave uncharacteristically and violently under its influence: Hero and Leander, whose story is obliquely referred to in 258–63, merely exemplify the unnatural conduct of one species among many.<sup>91</sup> Again, echoes of Lucretius' attack on love in *DRN* 4 are combined with allusions to his celebration of animal sexuality in the proem to book 1. The eager animals that follow Venus over meadows and rivers in their desire to reproduce reappear in Virgil's version as horses maddened by the flame of *amor*, like Lucretius' *human* lovers. So too the universal power which Virgil attributes to *amor* recalls that of Lucretius' goddess, but it is described in terms of the fiery madness of book 4, not the joyful creativity of book 1.<sup>92</sup> In the *Georgics*, then, there is no distinction between love and sex, *amor* and reproduction: neither in the human nor in the animal kingdom is one possible without the other. Yet the farmer needs to exploit these dangerous forces if he is to breed his animals successfully: the horse that is 'cold' and unwilling when it comes to mating is no use to him (95–100).<sup>93</sup> The

<sup>89</sup> Compare the equivocation between plant growth, animal reproduction and the generation of all objects from atomic 'seeds' in the language of 1.159–214. The metaphor also occurs in less developed form in 4.1107, where it emphasizes the primary, reproductive function of sexual intercourse, obscured by the delusive passion of love. For earlier examples of ploughing and sowing metaphors, see Adams (1982), pp. 154f., Mynors *ad loc.* and Brown (1987) *ad DRN* 4.1272: euphemistic references to ploughing and furrows are common (especially in tragedy), but the metaphor is rarely as developed as in Lucretius.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. p. 97 above, and Gale (1991), pp. 419f., where the passage is discussed in more detail.

<sup>91</sup> Note in particular the anonymity of the mythical characters, and cf. p. 97 and n. 125 above.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. esp. 242 with *DRN* 1.1–4, and 253f. and 269f. with *DRN* 1.14–20 (for detailed correspondences, see p. 97, n. 126 above).

<sup>93</sup> On the wider implications of the imagery of fire and war in 95–100, see further pp. 262–3 below.



*labores* of love are not so different from agricultural *labor* as we might at first suppose: when applied to mating, the term suggests both the ‘toil’ of agriculture in general, and also the sufferings that afflict both man and beast, in book 3 above all.

As we have already seen, the theme of *labor* as suffering is introduced near the beginning of the book, in 66–8:

optima quaeque dies miseris mortalibus aevi  
prima fugit; subeunt morbi tristicque senectus  
et labor, et durae rapit inclementia mortis.

The best days of our lives are the first to fly by for wretched mortal creatures; then sickness and sorry old age and toil come upon us, till death’s merciless cruelty carries us off.

Here, too, Lucretian language is used to make a substantially anti-Lucretian point. The phrase *miseris mortalibus* (‘wretched mortals’) is Lucretius’ translation of the Homeric δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσι (*DRN* 5.944; cf. also *miseros homines*, 3.60 and *mortalibus aegris*, 6.1); but it is used by Lucretius to make a specific polemical point (early man’s existence was wretched, as is that of the unenlightened who have not been saved by the Epicurean gospel). Virgil, on the other hand, implies that mortals in general are wretched, because of their very mortality – a view which Lucretius vigorously rejects.<sup>94</sup> The Virgilian context does offer a kind of solution: the farmer, like Lucretius’ Nature, must compensate for the death of the individual by maintaining the continuity of the species (*aliam ex alia generando sufficere prolem*, ‘supply your flock by breeding one generation from another’, 65). This recalls one of the arguments deployed by Lucretius in his great ‘diatribe’ against the fear of death at the end of book 3.<sup>95</sup> Not only is death nothing to us, but it is necessary, because our atoms are needed for new creation: *cedit enim rerum novitate extrusa vetustas | semper, et ex aliis aliud reparare necessest* (‘for the old always gives way, driven out by something new, and it is essential that one thing be created from another’, 3.964f.).<sup>96</sup> But the emphasis in Virgil’s version is very much on the misery of the individual, not on the continuity of the species: the build-up of emotive adjectives in 66–8 (*optima*, ‘best’, *miseris*,

<sup>94</sup> See especially 3.830: *nil igitur mors est ad nos neque pertinet hilum* (‘death, then, is nothing to us and matters not at all’). *letum* (‘death’) and *labor* are again closely connected by Virgil in *Aen.* 6.277, where the pair are described as *terribiles visu formae* (‘phantoms dreadful to behold’).

<sup>95</sup> Cf. pp. 49–50 above.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. also 1.263: *alid ex alio reficit* [cf. *refice*, ‘replace’, *Geo.* 3.70] *natura nec ullam | rem gigni patitur nisi morte adiuta aliena* (‘nature makes one thing from another and allows nothing to be born without the aid of another’s death’).

‘wretched’, *tristis*, ‘sorry’, *durae*, ‘cruel’) is not really cancelled out by the surrounding advice. The problem raised here – whether the suffering of the individual is compensated for by the survival of the race – is one that the poet will come back to in book 4.

Within the confines of book 3, the ‘problem of pain’ is raised again, more dramatically, in the poet’s lament for the dying ox in the finale (3.525–30, quoted on p. 95 above). As we saw in chapter 2, the animal is characterized in a way that strongly recalls the happy farmer at the end of book 2;<sup>97</sup> for the ox, however, there is no *secura quies* (‘untroubled peace’, 2.467). It has merely exchanged the *labor* of agriculture for the *labor* of sickness and death; though its simple, untroubled life was exemplary from the Epicurean point of view, now *acrior illum cura domat* (‘it is subdued by a crueller pain’, as Virgil says of the wolf a few lines later). Lucretius would no doubt have responded with the Epicurean formulae ‘death is nothing to us’, ‘pain is either mild or short-lived’.<sup>98</sup> Virgil’s version of the plague suggests that such aphorisms are inadequate in the face of the arbitrary cruelty of disease and death. For Lucretius, *ratio* is all: once we understand the true causes of plagues or any other terrifying natural occurrence, there is nothing left to fear. Virgil begins by promising in good Lucretian style to expound the causes of disease (440);<sup>99</sup> but once he launches into the finale proper, the emphasis is on the horror of the experience itself, the pain and ugliness of the disease (494–514), the helplessness of the Norici (who can neither communicate with the gods (486–93) nor find relief in the arts of medicine (548–50)), and the perversion of the natural order of things (534–47). Though the detail is almost all derived from Lucretius’ account of the Athenian plague at the end of *DRN* 6, the tone is radically altered: Lucretius’ calm, sometimes satirical detachment has given way to a horrified sympathy on the narrator’s part.<sup>100</sup> The climactic picture of the fury Tisiphone driving Disease and Fear before her (551–3) makes the point particularly clear: the image recalls the *makarismos* of the philosophical poet who ‘trampled beneath his feet all fears and inexorable fate and the din of greedy Acheron’ (2.490–2). Now Fear is on the loose again, and Tisiphone grows greater day by day: the phrase *caput altius effert* (‘begins to raise her head’) recalls the fears that ‘raise their heads’ (*caput erigere infit*, also at the line-end) in *DRN* 5.1208, and the demon *religio*,

<sup>97</sup> Cf. p. 41, n. 68 above, and Thomas *ad loc.*      <sup>98</sup> Epicurus, *Ep. Men.* 133, *K.D.* 2 and 4.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. esp. 3.1070 and 6.1090–3; Freudenburg (1987) lists further Lucretian parallels.

<sup>100</sup> Contrast especially Virgil’s sympathetic account of the death of the oxen with the corresponding passage in Lucretius, 6.1235–46; see further pp. 45–7 above.

*quae caput a caeli regionibus ostendebat, | horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans* ('which showed its head from the realms of heaven, a terrifying apparition looming over mortal men') in 1.64f. In both cases, Lucretius connects fear with ignorance,<sup>101</sup> but as we have seen, Virgil implies that pure *ratio* may not be enough.

In the first two books of the poem, *labor* is seen to be unavoidable, but not necessarily unrewarding: though the poet casts doubt on the Epicurean ideal of freedom from fear and care, he suggests, paradoxically, that the farmer's humble toil might itself be a means of attaining *secura quies*. The third book is darker in its implications: the *labores* of disease and sexual attraction are ultimately inescapable, and may destroy the order and productivity created by agricultural *labor* and the farmer's solicitous *cura* for his animals. And yet, we saw that the poet offers consolation of a sort: the farmer's role is to ensure that, though the individual grows old and dies, the 'race' survives. This idea is explored further in the final book.

#### Book 4

In general terms, both *labor* and *curae* are much less prominent in Virgil's account of the bees than in any of the earlier books. If we leave aside for the moment the opening reference to the poem as *labor* and the Aristaeus epyllion, we are left with only five references to *labor* and three to *curae*, and these are concentrated in two relatively short passages: 103–24 (the discussion of flowers and gardens, leading up to the interlude on the old gardener of Tarentum) and 149–96 (the special, communal nature of life in the hive, granted to the bees as a gift by Jupiter). The hive is in fact largely self-sustaining: the bees organize their own *labores*, and so need relatively little assistance from the bee-keeper.<sup>102</sup> Their smallness makes them vulnerable to external conditions, especially cold weather, so that the farmer still needs to be watchful (note *metuenda*, 'to be feared', 37;

<sup>101</sup> *rationalis egestas* ('want of reason') in 5.1211, as against the fearless *animi virtus* ('courageous mind') of Epicurus in 1.66–71.

<sup>102</sup> Note especially *labor omnibus unus* ('one task is shared by all') in 184, which acts as a kind of answer to *amor omnibus idem* ('love is the same for all') in 3.244: as the only animals not subject to the toils of love and sex, the bees are free to pursue their own, quasi-agricultural *labor*. Cf. also *laborem experiantur*, 'they undertake labour', 156f, *foedere pacto exercentur agris*, 'they work the fields by fixed agreement', 158f, *oppida curae*, 'care for the town', 178. On the implications of the military imagery in these lines, see p. 266 below.

*sin . . . metues*, 'if you fear', 239), and must exercise care in choosing a site for the hive; but otherwise his main tasks are to prevent his bees from fighting or swarming, and to collect the honey which they have made.

The one place where the bee-keeper's *labores* are stressed is the section following on the discussion of swarming and 'battles' in 67–102. The next twenty lines contain a remarkable concentration of the key words *labor* and *cura*, comparable to that of the concluding lines on the demands of viticulture in book 2. The bee-keeper must prevent his bees from swarming by pulling off the wings of the kings: this is an easy enough job (*nec magnus . . . labor*, 'no great labour', 106), but he should also devote considerable effort to cultivating the sweet-smelling plants which attract the insects (*ipse labore manum duro terat*, 'let him harden his own hands with heavy labour', 114; cf. *curae*, 113).<sup>103</sup> Finally, as the poet begins his digression on the old man of Tarentum, the poem is referred to as a *labor* (116), and the art of gardening as a *cura* (118). We saw earlier that the stress placed on the labours of viticulture in 2.397–419 served in part to increase the impact of the immediately following claim that the olive needs no cultivation. The effect of the juxtaposition in book 4 may be similar, since though the old Corycian clearly does work – and works hard – there is no explicit reference to *labor* in the twenty-two lines devoted to him.<sup>104</sup>

The passage in question is one of the most puzzling and elusive parts of the poem, and has been much discussed by critics, who are divided as to whether the gardener should be seen as an *exemplum* of *labor* or of quasi-philosophical detachment, as an analogue to or as a contrast with the bees.<sup>105</sup> As Clay (1989) points out, the very obtrusive way in which the digression is marked off as such 'obliges us to question its meaning and relation to its context far more insistently than if the poet had integrated it smoothly into the surrounding material'. In more than one way, the passage recalls the mood of the *Eclogues*: not only does the old man's

<sup>103</sup> Again, as in 2.397–419, anaphora (*ipse . . . ipse . . . ipse*, 'himself . . . himself . . . himself', 112–15) increases the sense of effort involved. Note too the intensifying effect of the adjectives *altis* ('high', 112), *late* ('far and wide', 113) and *duro* ('heavy', 114).

<sup>104</sup> Burck (1956) suggests a further link with the theme of wild vs. cultivated at the beginning of book 2: the two passages are connected through the image of the poem as sea-voyage in 4.116f. and 2.41. He believes, however, that the emphasis throughout book 4 is on work, rather than spontaneous fertility.

<sup>105</sup> For the former view, see esp. Härke (1936), p. 55, Burck (1956), Wilkinson (1969), pp. 102–4, Landolfi (1991); for the latter, La Penna (1977), Perkell (1981), Clay (1989). Grimal (1984), pp. 388–92, argues that the Corycian's garden is inherently ambiguous, in that it is neither a kitchen garden nor a pleasure garden but 'une image à demi poétique, à demi religieuse, d'un paradis'.

garden have touches of the *locus amoenus* about it (the flowers and fruit and especially the shady trees of 146), but he seems to enjoy an almost magical harmony with nature.<sup>106</sup> Like Tityrus' farm in *Ecl.* 1.46–58, his land is simultaneously a poor, unpromising spot and a haven of peace and beauty. The interlude has, too, something of the teasing, dreamlike quality so characteristic of the *Eclogues*, which similarly combine real place names with elements of fantasy.<sup>107</sup>

Who, then, is this old Corycian, and why is his plot of land so specifically placed near the city of Tarentum? As in the *Eclogues* it is difficult to identify any of the characters precisely, however suggestive the associations which cluster around them, so here the old man must remain something of a mystery.<sup>108</sup> Nevertheless, it does seem plausible, as several critics have suggested, to see philosophical colouring in the way that his land is described.<sup>109</sup> The old man is emphatically self-sufficient and isolated from society at large: Tarentum itself is remote from the centres of power,<sup>110</sup> and the old man lives outside the city. He apparently has no family (unlike the farmer in the finale to book 2), though the plural *potantibus* ('drinkers') in 146 suggests the company of friends. Finally, he is more than content with his humble life: he lives 'like a king' on the simple fare he has grown with his own hands (132f.). Can we perhaps go further and see a specific reference here to the Epicurean ideals of

<sup>106</sup> Cf. also Loupiac (1992), who draws attention to the absence of *labor* in the *Eclogues*.

<sup>107</sup> The picture may be further complicated by echoes of Philetas: Thomas (1992) argues on the basis of resemblances between Virgil's garden and the garden described in Longus 2.3 (and owned by a *character* called Philetas) that both are following a common source, i.e. a poem of Philetas himself. Thus, the garden and the old man are representatives of the pastoral – as opposed to the didactic/georgic – tradition. I cannot do justice here to Thomas' complex and ingenious argument (but cf. Leigh (1994) for some qualifications): though largely convincing, his reconstruction of Philetas' work must remain highly speculative in our present state of ignorance about the man and his poetry.

<sup>108</sup> Thomas (1992), pp. 58–61 links the location in southern Italy with the provenance of the Theocritean characters Corydon and Comatas in *Id.* 4, 5 and 7, and detects a further allusion to Philetas. Even if Thomas is right, however, the specific details of the location outside the city of Tarentum may still be explained along the lines I suggest: 'pastoral' and 'Epicurean' readings of the passage are not incompatible.

<sup>109</sup> See esp. La Penna (1977), pp. 60–6 and Clay (1989). On gardens as a setting for philosophical discourse, see Grimal (1984), pp. 359–98.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Horace's *terrarum angulus* ('secluded corner of the land'), *Carm.* 2.6.13f. Perkell (1981) stresses the old man's detachment from the city: though it is close by, he apparently does not use it as a market for his fruit or flowers. Contrast the passage in Varro (*R.R.* 3.16.10) which appears to have served as Virgil's model: Varro tells how two brothers were able to make a large profit by keeping bees on the small piece of land they had been left, and selling the honey. Virgil's old man, by contrast, seems to work for himself alone.

autarchy and withdrawal from society? Certainly, these principles were not exclusively Epicurean; but is it simply coincidence that Epicurus' school was also a Garden, situated just outside the city of Athens? The oblique suggestion of a community of friends in 146 would also fit neatly with this view. If Servius is right to claim that the old man should be identified as an ex-pirate,<sup>111</sup> his change of state might be seen as a powerful symbol of the process the Epicureans called *galenismos* (literally, 'becalming'): from an earlier lawless and perilous life as both warrior and sailor (both are examples of un-Epicurean pursuits in the proem to book 2 and elsewhere in the *DRN*),<sup>112</sup> he has turned to a peaceful and contented existence, free from strife and *labor* (at least in the Lucretian sense of unnecessary or unrewarding toil). Finally, it is worth noting that flowers, bees and honey occur more than once in the *DRN* as symbols for (Epicurean) pleasure<sup>113</sup> – though flower-symbolism of this kind is obviously not in any sense unique to Lucretius.

Whether or not we see a specifically Epicurean reference in the details of the description, there does seem to be a fairly clear contrast with the communal, regimented life of the bees, which the poet goes on to deal with in the next section. The bees, like the farmer, are subject to constant *labor*, whereas the old man's garden seems more reminiscent of the harmonious peace of the Golden Age. Unlike the bees, he is both individualized (hence, perhaps, the specificity of the names in 125–7) and solitary; he also appears to take pleasure in beauty for its own sake (since the flowers are apparently not grown for sale).<sup>114</sup> He is also completely self-sufficient (*dapibus inemptis*, 'banquets for which he has paid nothing', 133), where the bees are in various ways dependent both on their king and on the farmer, particularly in hot or cold weather (37 and 239);<sup>115</sup> the old man, by contrast, cultivates his garden in accordance with the passing seasons, however much he may chide the spring for its lateness (134–43), and lives like a king himself (132).

<sup>111</sup> Servius' claim has recently been defended by Marasco (1990); see also Leigh (1994), pp. 182f.

<sup>112</sup> War: 2.5f., 2.40–9, 5.999–1001, 5.1226–32; navigation: 2.1–14, 2.43a, 4.967f., 5.999–1001.

<sup>113</sup> See esp. 2.33 and 3.11; cf. also 1.8, 1.928 = 4.3, 1.947 = 4.22, 2.398f., 2.504, 4.1134.

<sup>114</sup> Clay (1989) contrasts the bees' more utilitarian *amor florum* ('love of flowers', 205). Griffin (1979) draws attention to the bees' lack of *ars*; here, too, the old man perhaps provides a counterpoint, given the very common association between (catalogues of) flowers and poetic artistry (cf. esp. Meleager *A.P.* 4.1).

<sup>115</sup> The bees' delicacy and fastidiousness is particularly emphasized in 8–50 and 228–80, their dependency on the king in 210–14.

The old man and the bees thus exemplify two conflicting ideals, which we might call the philosophical and the Roman. Neither seems to be wholly satisfactory: the bees' indulgence in civil war and absolute devotion to their king are less than desirable qualities; whereas the old man's garden has an air of unreality about it – the digression is distanced from poet and reader in time (note *memini*, 'I remember', 125) and space, like the lost Golden Age described in precisely corresponding lines in book 1 (125–46).<sup>116</sup> The fleeting quality of the digression, underlined by the references to pressures of time in 116f. and 147f., also recalls the double *makarismos* in the finale to book 2: there too the poet claims to be 'prevented' from composing a philosophical epic (483f.), and – while he praises Lucretius for his conquest of fear and fate – identifies more closely with his rustic subjects than with the philosopher. So in book 4, the theme of gardens is left to others: the Corycian's 'philosophical' lifestyle is not for the poet of *labor*.

And yet in other ways, Virgil's self-presentation in book 4 seems to align him with the gardener rather than with the bees. In the *sphragis* he portrays himself as indulging in 'the pursuits of inglorious *otium*' while Octavian is busy pacifying the world, and looks back to the pastoral poetry of his youth. Propertius seems to have perceived some such connexion, for he conflates the two passages and pictures Virgil singing of Thyrsis and Daphnis in the environs of Tarentum:

tu canis umbrosi subter pineta Galaesi  
Thyrsin et attritis Daphnin harundinibus.

Prop. 2.34.67f.<sup>117</sup>

Beneath the pines of shady Galaesus you sing of Thyrsis and of  
Daphnis with his well-worn pipe.

The poet looks back on his own past with some ambivalence, just as he looks back on his 'memory' of the old Corycian: the juxtaposition of his own *vita umbratilis* and Tityrus' pastoral *otium* with the military and political activities of Octavian leaves us with an unresolved tension, which parallels both the contrast between the gardener and the bees and the contrast between the solitary poet/lover Orpheus and the practical Aristaeus in the epyllion.

<sup>116</sup> The poeticism *Oebalia* . . . *arx* ('the citadel of Oebalus') for Tarentum in 125 perhaps also serves to distance the Corycian, and lend him a kind of mythic aura: compare Lucretius' 'mythicization' of Athens at the beginning of his account of the plague (6.1138–43), discussed in Gale (1994a), pp. 112f. and 225.

<sup>117</sup> For a slightly different interpretation of this passage, see Thomas (1992), pp. 55–8.

Aristaeus is in many ways the perfect exemplar of the didactic precepts issued by the poet in the first three books of the poem.<sup>118</sup> He has laboured over the cultivation of his crops, trees and animals (326–32), and prays for help to the goddess Cyrene (admittedly something of a special case, since she is his mother). Though he protests at the unfairness of fate, as the poet himself had done in 3.525–30, this time the bitter questions get an answer, and Aristaeus is duly rewarded for his dutiful observance of the goddess' commands. He is both a *cura* to the goddess (354) and has his own *tristes curae* ('sorrowful anxieties', 531), which he is enabled to 'lay down', however, through his obedient performance of Cyrene's instructions. Looked at in this light, Aristaeus' story illustrates the value of *labor* in its most positive and optimistic sense: work and obedience please the gods (as Hesiod says) and win their due reward. Orpheus, on the other hand, is a solitary and unproductive figure. His *labor* – the quest to win back Eurydice – is all wasted (492), because of his moment of very human passion. Here we have an exemplar of the kind of *labor* depicted in book 3: the suffering which afflicts all human beings<sup>119</sup> and animals owing to their subjection to destructive *furor* and disease.

The 'outer' and 'inner' panels of the epyllion, then, can be seen to some extent as encapsulating the tension between the 'Roman' notion of *labor* as virtuous industry and the Lucretian notion of *labor* as futile passion. Aristaeus' success does not cancel out Orpheus' suffering, nor vice versa. The contrasting fates of the two heroes also provide an opportunity for further reflexion on the relationship between the death of the individual and the survival of the race, a theme which, as we saw, is introduced at the beginning of book 3. The bees are not individualized: though each insect is short-lived, the survival of the hive is the important thing (203–9). The *bougonia* does not really bring them back to life: rather, it substitutes a new hive. Yet this is unimportant, since one group of bees is interchangeable with another. Aristaeus has no difficulty accepting this; Orpheus, on the contrary, is wholly devoted to one individual, and will accept no other woman in Eurydice's place. Orpheus' dedication is in some ways a negative thing: it leads first to sterility (symbolized by the icy landscapes of 507–20) and finally to his own death. And yet the narrator shows as much sympathy for his fate as for that of the plough-ox in book 3. Sublime indifference to individual suffering is essential to agricultural

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Conte (1986) and p. 52 above.

<sup>119</sup> It is important to note that Aristaeus, too, is subject to *amor*: it is his amorous pursuit of Eurydice which causes her death and thus indirectly brings about the loss of his bees.



success, as it is to the attainment of Epicurean *ataraxia* and, by extension, to the creation of a community which functions with the efficiency and unanimity of the beehive; but the poet's portrayal of the plough-ox, or the birds whose nest is destroyed in 2.207–11, or Orpheus himself, does not encourage indifference in the reader.

It is also important that Orpheus, too, is a poet-figure. His role in the epyllion thus forms the climax of a series of passages throughout the poem – some of which we have mentioned briefly in passing – which reflect on the role of the poet in society and the relationship between agricultural and poetic *labor*.

### The poet's *labor*

We saw at the beginning of this chapter that poetic *labor* is the only kind of *labor* which Lucretius values: in a sense, the teaching and learning of Epicureanism are substituted for more traditional goals as the only tasks worth expending effort on. Here too, Virgil complicates the picture: poetic *labor* is differently treated in different parts of the poem, so that its value and meaning becomes as difficult to define as that of agricultural *labor*.<sup>120</sup>

The first place where poetry or song and *labor* are brought into relation with each other is 1.293 (discussed above), where song is seen as a temporary respite or consolation for the unremitting toil demanded of the farmer and his family. Orpheus, too, attempts to find consolation in song (4.464), though without apparent success.<sup>121</sup>

At the beginning of book 2, however, the poet seems to take on a more active role: his *labor* (39) parallels that of the farmer (61), and he is actually envisaged as joining in the planting of vines and olives:

iuvat Ismara Baccho  
conserere atque olea magnum vestire Taburnum.

2.37f.

It pleases me to plant Ismarus with vines and to clothe great Taburnus with the olive.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. pp. 44–5 above, and Rutherford (1995), on the different views expressed as to the poet's function and value to the community in different parts of the poem.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. Thomas *ad* 1.293–4.

Poetry is seen here as a civilizing force: the audience is to learn how to tame the wild and create beauty and order from the chaotic vitality of nature (36).<sup>122</sup> There is a hint of Orpheus here too: in line 52, the reader is assured that wild trees can be tamed and will 'follow' whatever course the farmer dictates to them. But the poet here is more like the Orpheus of Horace's *Ars Poetica* (where he is allegorized as a symbol for the poet's public role)<sup>123</sup> than Virgil's Orpheus, who seems completely indifferent to his power over animals and trees (4.510). Here, the Orphic poet is a public benefactor and teacher; in the epyllion, he has withdrawn into the private world of song as personal expression.

The didactic pose adopted in 2.35–8 also has Lucretian resonances, since the impersonal *iuvat* ('it pleases me') recalls (in this programmatic context) the 'apology for poetry' at *DRN* 1.926–50 (=4.1–25):

avia Pieridum peragro loca nullius ante  
trita solo. *iuvat* integros accedere fontis  
atque haurire, *iuvatque* novos decerpere flores  
insignemque meo capiti petere inde coronam  
unde prius nulli velarint tempora musae.

I roam through the pathless haunts of the Muses, where no foot has trodden before mine. It pleases me to draw near to untouched springs and drink, it pleases me to pluck fresh flowers and seek for my head a garland of glory in places where the Muses have crowned no other's head.

The emphasis on novelty here has strong Callimachean overtones,<sup>124</sup> but originality is not to be pursued for its own sake: Lucretius goes on to celebrate the liberating and enlightening power of his poetry, which will 'sweeten' the medicine of Epicureanism and so persuade the reader to take the cure. Virgil similarly modifies the Callimachean emphasis on stylistic elegance and playfulness, setting off the ideals of brevity, selectivity and polish (42–6) against the claim to usefulness in 35–7. *labor* in 39 can

<sup>122</sup> The agricultural landscape here owes something to *DRN* 5.1367–78 (cf. esp. *fructusque feros mansuescere . . . colendo*, 'and wild fruits grew tame . . . with cultivation', 1368f. with *fructusque feros mollite colendo*, 'tame the wild fruits by cultivation', *Geo.* 2.36). The attractive picture sketched by Lucretius acts as a kind of emblem of the positive aspect of human creativity, counterbalancing the brutal and chaotic images of warfare in 1308–40; the word *lepos* ('charm') in 1376 is particularly significant, since this is Lucretius' term for the attractive and compelling power of poetry (1.28, 1.934 = 4.9; cf. Venus' power over the animals in 1.15, and 3.1036).

<sup>123</sup> *A.P.* 391–3.

<sup>124</sup> On Callimacheanism in Lucretius, see Ferrero (1949), Kenney (1970), Brown (1982).

be understood both in the sense of public service and in the sense of Callimachean refinement.<sup>125</sup>

The Lucretian *iuvat* ('it pleases me') recurs in a very similar context towards the end of the book: this time the verb is repeated, so that the parallel with Lucretius is even closer:

et iuvat undantem buxo spectare Cytorum  
Naryciaeque picis lucos, iuvat arva videre  
non rastris, hominum non ulli obnoxia curae. 2.437-9

And it pleases me to look on the waving box-trees of Cyturus, and Naryx with its groves of pitch-pine; it pleases me to see land which owes nothing to the hoe or to human care.

Though there is no explicit reference to poetry, the echo of the earlier passage – and the reminiscence of Lucretius' programme – is so clear that it seems reasonable to connect the two. The sentiment that the poet expresses here is virtually the opposite of his earlier claim. At the beginning of the book, he delights in planting trees and taming the wild; here, wild trees themselves are the cause of his pleasure, trees that explicitly need no human care. The active role of teacher/planter has been exchanged for the passive role of observer, the poet's *labor* for freedom from *curae*. Here we might think of another Lucretian figure, the dispassionate spectator of the proem to book 2, who can take pleasure in his own freedom from the *labores* which trouble the rest of the human race, and is secure in his disengagement from the society around him.<sup>126</sup> We might even go so far as to see Virgil uncovering another potential inconsistency in Lucretius' poem: the missionary fervour which is so characteristic of the *DRN* might well be thought to contradict the detachment which he advocates in this passage and elsewhere.<sup>127</sup>

In the finale, Virgil makes this detached stance more explicit, apparently turning his back on the hope of a political solution to Rome's problems which he sought at the end of book 1; now the public life of

<sup>125</sup> On the Callimachean resonances of the lines, see esp. Thomas *ad* 41-5, 42-4 and 44-5. For the connexion between literary *labor* and *utilitas* ('usefulness'), see Lau (1975), pp. 168-84, who argues that the word is commoner in this sense than as a declaration of allegiance to Callimachean canons of style; and cf. n. 30 above for a similar conflation of ideas in Lucretius.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. n. 73 above.

<sup>127</sup> Hence, as I argued above, the stress on friendship in 1.136-45 and elsewhere: as an important ideal of the school, friendship can be invoked to justify the poet's *labor* and apparent violation of the principle 'live unknown'.

the city is contrasted with the peace of the countryman, which approximates to the ideals of tranquillity and political disengagement preached by the Epicureans. The contrast between the two finales is underlined by the chariot metaphor in the closing lines (541–2), where the poet represents himself as resting his weary horses before setting out on the second leg of his journey. Unlike the charioteer at the end of the previous book, the poet seems very much in control of his vehicle; the chariot of poetry is brought to a halt at just the right moment, the midpoint of the poem, while the chariot of state runs on unchecked by its helpless driver.<sup>128</sup>

The image of the the poet's journey in the chariot of the Muses is traditional, going back at least to Pindar;<sup>129</sup> in the context of the *Georgics*, however, the metaphor takes on a new significance. The charioteer is also a figure found frequently in philosophical and other contexts as a symbol of order and control. The chariot may represent the soul, which can be pulled off its course by madness or irrational impulses; or the regular movements of the cosmos may be compared to those of a chariot or ship, in order to prove that the world is subject to divine guidance and control.<sup>130</sup> These associations reflect Virgil's central concerns in the *Georgics*. As we have seen, agriculture is represented – particularly in books 2 and 3 – as an unceasing struggle to create order in an environment which constantly threatens to revert to chaos and wilderness.<sup>131</sup> The ploughman uses his 'chariot' (*currus*, 1.174) to create an orderly agricultural landscape out of the 'rough plain' (2.211); he must combat the ever-present threats of weeds, pests and shade which endanger his efforts (1.118–21), and guard against the gradual degeneration of seeds and nature in general (1.193–203). The farmer in book 2 is faced with rampant but infertile natural growth which must be tamed and civilized if it is to bear fruit (2.47–72; cf. also 362–70 on pruning); in book 3, the chaotic forces of sexuality and disease threaten to overturn the natural order and the labour which the farmer has devoted to the care of his

<sup>128</sup> Contrast especially *nos immensum spatiis confecimus aequor* ('I have covered much ground on my course') with *addunt in spatiis* ('gathering speed from lap to lap').

<sup>129</sup> E.g. Pindar *Ol.* 9.81, *Pyth.* 10.65, *Isthm.* 8.62; Bacch. 5.177; Callim. *Aet. fr.* 1.25–8 Pf.; Lucr. 6.47; Prop. 2.10.2, 3.1.9–14; Ovid, *Am.* 3.15.18. Cf. Becker (1937), pp. 68–85.

<sup>130</sup> Soul as charioteer: e.g. Plato, *Phdr.* 246a–257a; Aesch. *Choe.* 1021–4, *P. V.* 882–4; Eur. *El.* 1253, *Or.* 36, *I. T.* 82f. (and cf. *H. F.* 947–9); Columella 3.10.9; god as charioteer: see esp. [Arist.] *De Mundo* 400b; cf. Arist. *De Phil.* fr. 12b Ross, Cic. *N. D.* 2.87. Compare also Horace's image of life as a chariot-race (*Sat.* 1.1.114–16).

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Wilhelm (1982).

animals.<sup>132</sup> The politician, too, aims to create an ordered society (like the beehive of book 4), and to restrain the irrational impulses of violence and aggression which lead to the chaos and destructiveness of civil war. Farmer and statesman are in some ways parallel figures, and the poet's craft has analogies with both vocations: the poet, too, is like a charioteer, steering a careful course through the potentially infinite amount of material available to him. At the end of book 2, however, the poet and farmer are allied in their withdrawal from the great world of war and politics, and the violence and disorder of public life are represented as the very antithesis of rural and poetic order, like the runaway chariot of the first finale.

The next book begins, however, with an abrupt return to the public *persona*. In the opening lines of book 3, the poet turns from the peaceful retirement celebrated at the end of the previous book, and sees himself in something like the traditional role of the epic poet, both sharing in the glory of his patron's victories and perpetuating that glory in his verse.<sup>133</sup> Here the poet's car is both a racing chariot (18)<sup>134</sup> and the triumphal chariot in which he brings the captive Muses from Greece to Italy (10–15). The victories which Virgil celebrates are at once his own poetic triumphs and the more literal triumphs of Octavian (26–33); in immortalizing the *princeps* he will win his own immortality (8f.). We might see another instance of engagement with Lucretius in the striking image of *Invidia* ('Envy') cowering in the underworld at the end of the proem. Callimachean allusion<sup>135</sup> is again combined with reflexion on the Lucretian world-view: as Thomas points out, the lines recall (and reverse) the *makarismos* at the end of the previous book (there, the man hailed as *felix*, 'happy', trampled fear and the terrors of the underworld underfoot; here, *Invidia*, condemned as *infelix*, 'unhappy', cowers in fear of those same

<sup>132</sup> Note especially the unnatural behaviour of the animals in 3.245–68 and 537–47 (these passages are discussed in detail in ch. 6; see also Miles (1975)).

<sup>133</sup> On the relationship between the finale to book 2 and the proem to book 3, particularly the opposition between Lucretian didactic and Ennian epic, see esp. Hardie (1986), pp. 33–51.

<sup>134</sup> Or, strictly speaking, a hundred racing chariots, taking part in the Italian Games over which the poet imagines himself as presiding in 17–25. Thomas (*ad loc.*) glosses *agitabo* as 'cause to be driven'; but, given that the whole passage is an extended metaphor for poetic composition, it seems legitimate to take the use of the first person as significant, and to link the *centum quadriugos* with the triumphal procession in 10f.

<sup>135</sup> *Invidia* clearly suggests envious *Phthonos* ('Envy'), spurned by Apollo at the end of *Hymn* 2, though the implications are political as well as poetic: poet and *princeps* triumph together, and both will transcend the envy that might bring them down. Cf. Thomas and Mynors *ad loc.*, Grimal (1964) and Dickie (1983).

terrors).<sup>136</sup> There is also an echo of Lucretius' condemnation of political ambition in his account of the civil wars that preceded the establishment of republican government (5.1120–42). The struggle for high office is vain, because *invidia* strikes the successful man like lightning and casts him down to Tartarus (1125f.); and civil war is the direct result (*ergo*, 'so', 1136) of bitter competition for power. Better, then, to withdraw from the struggle and 'live unknown'; better to be ruled than to want to rule. Virgil's picture of the defeat of *invidia* offers a kind of answer to this: Octavian has finally abolished the ruinous competition which brought about the civil wars, and his rule has established a new age of peace once and for all.

The proem to book 3 strikes the most confident note of all the passages in the poem which reflect on the role of and the relationship between poet and *princeps*. But it does not entirely resolve the tensions between public and private, active and passive which we have been tracing through the first two books. Accordingly, a more troubling view of poetry is introduced in the so-called 'second proem' which introduces the second half of book 3.

Here again, the poet depicts himself in the role of charioteer. This time, the image suggests a Callimachean pursuit of the novel and *recherché*: this chariot must be driven on steep and narrow paths which none have travelled before (291–3, recalling Apollo's advice to the poet in *Aetia* fr. 1.25–8 Pf.). Given the importance in Callimachean poetics of the ideals of elegance and polish, we might expect the emphasis to fall once again on order and control. Yet in fact the opposite is the case: the poet represents himself as driven by *amor* over the heights of Parnassus, in terms which suggest irrational and uncontrollable inspiration rather than self-conscious artifice, *ingenium* rather than *ars*. It is particularly striking that the poet's behaviour here mirrors that of the love-maddened horses described in the preceding lines: they too are dragged by *amor* over mountain heights and through deserted hills and valleys (252–4, 270, 276).<sup>137</sup> Like the animals of

<sup>136</sup> Dion (1993), pp. 168–73 suggests a further link with the farmer in the finale to book 2, who *neque . . . aut doluit miserans inopem aut invidit habenti* ('neither is he grieved by pity for the poor nor does he envy the wealthy', 498f.). Octavian's triumph seems at this point to have transcended the opposition between political and agricultural life.

<sup>137</sup> The parallel is reinforced by the phrase *captus amore* ('captivated by love'), which is a kind of pun: *amor* is not only the poet's love of his theme, it actually is his theme; cf. *Ed.* 6.10 (with Coleman (1977), *ad loc.*). Philip Hardie suggests to me (*per litteras*) that the word-play may owe something to Gallus, who is of course prominent in *Ecl.* 6; the Virgilian Gallus also plays on different senses of the word *amor* in *Ed.* 10.44 (where it is unclear whether *amor* means love of warfare or love of Lycoris).

242ff., the poet is possessed by a kind of *furor*, which may not be (fully) subject to rational control.<sup>138</sup>

This view of poetic inspiration as a kind of madness or divine possession goes back to Plato and beyond;<sup>139</sup> but the language which Virgil uses again suggests a more specific engagement with Lucretius. The 'apology' of *DRN* 1.926–50 (quoted on p. 186 above) is, once again, recalled here;<sup>140</sup> but this time, Virgil also echoes the preceding lines, in which Lucretius employs images of Dionysiac possession – images which might be felt to sit uneasily with the calm rationality elsewhere preached by the poet:

*nec me animi fallit quam sint obscura; sed acri  
percussit thyrsos laudis spes magna meum cor  
et simul incussit suavem mi in pectus amorem  
musarum, quo nunc instinctus mente vigenti  
avia Pieridum peragro loca . . .* *DRN* 1.922–30

Nor does it escape my mind how obscure these matters are; but high hope of praise has struck my breast sharply with its wand and wounded my heart with sweet love of the Muses; inspired by this love I roam with mind alert through the pathless haunts of the Muses . . .

*nec sum animi dubius verbis ea vincere magnum  
quam sit, et angustis hunc addere rebus honorem;  
sed me Parnasi deserta per ardua dulcis  
raptat amor; iuvat ire iugis, qua nulla priorum  
Castaliam molli devertitur orbita clivo.* *Geo.* 3.289–93

Nor is there any doubt in my mind how great a challenge it will be to master these matters with words, and to give such glory to these little things; but sweet love drags me over the deserted heights of Parnassus; it pleases me to cross ridges from which no other's wheel-track goes winding down the gentle slope to Castalia.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Dion (1993), pp. 299f. Dion notes the excited tone of the two earlier references to the love of poetry in the finale to book 2 (476 and 486); again, *amor musarum* ('love of the Muses') is presented as an intense and violent passion analogous to sexual *amor*.

<sup>139</sup> Plato, *Ion* 534a–b, *Phdr.* 245a, *Apol* 22b–c; cf. Democrit. frs. 17f. and 21.

<sup>140</sup> In addition to the correspondences highlighted below, cf. *iuvat* ('it pleases me') in *Geo.* 3.292 and *DRN* 1.927–8, and *qua nulla priorum* ('from which no other's [wheel tracks]', *Geo.* 3.292) with *unde prius nulli* ('where [the Muses have crowned] no other's [head]', *DRN* 1.930). The first two lines of the Virgilian passage also recall Lucretius' comments on the difficulty of his task in *DRN* 1.136–7.

The conventional language of poetic *furor* is appropriated by Lucretius as a means of representing the power of poetry, and explaining why he has chosen to expound Epicurus' philosophy in a medium so apparently inimical to it. Poetry exerts a powerful fascination over both poet and reader, which can be beneficial if used in the service of Epicurean truth (931–4). But there are obvious dangers for Lucretius in this approach: Epicurus seems to have rejected myth and poetry precisely because of their power to fascinate and attract, and their dangerously irrational qualities.<sup>141</sup> Lucretius claims to harness the seductive charm of poetry in the service of philosophical exposition; but he leaves himself open to the accusation that his medium is in its very nature detrimental to the ataraxic calm which he seeks to recommend to his reader. The Virgilian juxtaposition of erotic *amor* and *amor Musarum* ('love of the Muses') draws attention to the potential conflict between 'message' and medium: the poet in the *Georgics* is a figure who seeks to recommend order, control, disciplined obedience, while himself experiencing poetic inspiration as something irrational, uncontrollable and disturbing.<sup>142</sup> The second proem as a whole suggests a view of poetry as a combination of inspiration and *labor*, *ingenium* ('inspiration') and *ars* ('artistry'); in so doing, it challenges the confident claim of Lucretius that poetry can be used in the service of *ratio* to liberate mankind.

The penultimate reference to poetic *labor* falls in the proem to book 4.<sup>143</sup> The poet's diminutive subject-matter will bring him glory: *in tenui labor; at tenuis non gloria* ('my labours are on a small scale, but they will bring me no small glory', 4.6). On the face of it, this is a straightforward statement of allegiance to the Callimachean preference for 'slenderness' and humble themes. But there is also a hint of the ambivalence with which the bees are treated throughout the book: they are regarded with both admiration (*admiranda*, 'marvellous', 3) and detachment, as tiny and sometimes laughable creatures, whose heroic battles can be quelled with a handful of

<sup>141</sup> See Gale (1994a), pp. 14–18.

<sup>142</sup> There are intriguing parallels with Horace's handling of poetic inspiration in *Carm.* 3.25: Horace links the risky enterprise of praising Caesar with the *dulce periculum* of Dionysiac possession, and Bacchus is strikingly portrayed in 14–16 as a dangerous and violent god. As in Virgil, the image of the poet as a helpless vessel for the god's irrational power (*rapis*, 1; cf. *raptat*, *Geo.* 3.292) is conspicuously juxtaposed with a poem emphasizing the need for austerity and restraint (3.24, esp. *refrenare licentiam*, 29): the frenzied bacchant of 25.8–12 is worlds apart from those noble barbarians, the Scythians of 24.9–24.

<sup>143</sup> The final instance is 4.116, in the *praeteritio* leading up to the account of the old gardener of Tarentum (discussed above).



dust. Both *labor* and *gloria* are characteristic of the bees (156, 184, 205); they are contrasted, as we saw, with the philosophical ideal of peaceful seclusion represented by the old gardener of Tarentum.

The series of passages which we have been looking at sets out a complex range of different ways of viewing the poet's role in society and relationship with his audience and his subject-matter. Is the poet (or should he be) an active or a passive, a public or a private figure? Does poetry foster order and harmony or passion and anarchy? Is the role of the didactic speaker complementary to or opposed to that of the farmer and the statesman? I have already hinted that all these threads are brought together in the epyllion, in the figure of Orpheus and his opposite number Aristaeus.<sup>144</sup>

As the poet *par excellence*, Orpheus is both strong and weak: his music tames wild animals and draws trees after him, and he is (almost) able to triumph over death itself. Poetry, then, is a taming and civilizing force of great power; but its power is ultimately vitiated by passion. Orpheus' fatal backward glance is attributed to *dementia* or *furor*, a madness like that which dominates the animals and defeats the farmers' attempts to restrain them in book 3. As in the 'second proem', the poet is associated with passion and lack of control, the farmer with control and order.<sup>145</sup> He is also an isolated figure, unlike Aristaeus, who can call on Cyrene for help; yet, unlike the old man of Tarentum, he does not attain peace of mind in consequence of his isolation. His music is perhaps a source of consolation, but it cannot 'cure' his painful devotion to Eurydice.

Yet it is important not to over-simplify. It has already been pointed out that Aristaeus, too, is governed by passion, at least at the beginning of the story; and Orpheus' taming of trees and animals links him with the farmer and with the civilizing role of the didactic poet. As the 'second proem' hinted, the poet needs *ars* as well as *ingenium*, order and control as well as inspiration. In the end, then, no tidy opposition between poet and farmer is possible.

Throughout the poem, Virgil can be seen to reflect on the problems raised by Lucretius' juxtaposition of poetic inspiration and *ataraxia*, didac-

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Segal (1989), pp. 24f.; Conte (1986), pp. 130–40. The latter reads the epyllion in terms of a more specific conflict between two different *types* of poetry, linked in their turn with different modes of life, the active and the contemplative.

<sup>145</sup> As noted in chapter 2, Aristaeus' violent capture and restraint of Proteus has parallels with the sometimes violent control exerted by the farmer over the natural world.

ticism and detachment. In his painstaking *labor*, his Callimachean mastery over his material, the poet is like the farmer; in the irrationality of his inspiration, he is like the unruly nature that the farmer strives to control. He is sometimes a detached spectator of, sometimes a passionate participant in the activities he describes; sometimes closely involved with the farmer's and the statesman's struggles to bring order out of chaos, sometimes withdrawn from them into a private world of peace and self-sufficiency.

The final, laconic juxtaposition of poet and *princeps* in the *sphragis* holds these tensions in a kind of harmony, but does not offer a resolution. The reader is given no clear indication how to interpret the relationship between the exploits of the warrior and law-giver Octavian and the poet's *otium* in the lap of 'sweet Parthenope'. Should the image of the hero 'setting his course for Olympus' remind us of the demi-god immortalized in the proem to book 3, or of the struggling, Phaethon-like charioteer at the end of book 1?<sup>146</sup> Is the poet expressing gratitude for the pacification of the world, which allows him the leisure to sing Caesar's praises? Virgil's *otium* is paralleled by that of his creation Tityrus – who, we may remember, owed his pastoral ease to the intervention of the 'young god' Octavian (*Ecl.* 1.6). Or should the poet's modest retirement in Naples remind us of the opposition between political life and quasi-Epicurean peace in the finale to book 2? It is worth bearing in mind that the town had strong Epicurean associations, as the home of the philosopher Siro with whom Virgil is said to have studied in his youth.<sup>147</sup> Again, Virgil's employment of the alternative name Parthenope is perhaps more than a casual poeticism: the etymological connexion with the Greek noun παρθένος ('maiden') suggests youthful innocence; but the name also belonged to one of the Sirens, who was supposedly buried at Naples, and thus evokes the power of song.<sup>148</sup> The poet is both strong and weak, dependent and independent; the seductive power of his

<sup>146</sup> For the suggestion that the charioteer simile contains an implicit reference to the myth of Phaethon, see pp. 35–6 above. Hollis (1996) finds a significant intertext in Rhianus, fr. 1.13–16, an attack on the *hybris* of the wealthy and powerful; cf. also Ovid, *Met.* 1.152, where the Giants 'aim for' (*adfectasse*) the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>147</sup> For the Epicurean associations of Tarentum, see also Cic. *Ad Fam.* 7.12.1; Horace, *Carm.* 2.6.5–12, 3.5.53–6, *Epist.* 1.7.44f. and Nisbet and Hubbard (1978), p. 95.

<sup>148</sup> The verbs *alebat* and *florentem* in lines 563–4 suggest the image of virginity as a fragile flower, as in Cat. 62.39–47; there is also, perhaps, a pun on Virgil's nickname *Parthenias*, 'the maiden' (Donatus, *Vita* 11; cf. Korenjak (1995), O'Hara (1996), p. 289). For the Siren Parthenope, see Pliny, *N.H.* 3.62.

song could be viewed either as antithetical to or as complementary to Octavian's political and military might.

Despite its preoccupation with the importance and meaning of *labor*, the *Georgics* leaves us with no clear answers, though it raises many questions. Is *labor* a curse or a blessing, something empty or ennobling? Are the gods benevolent, hostile or indifferent? We are left poised between *labor improbus* and Jupiter's plan to sharpen human hearts, between the cooperative and single-minded work of the bees and the sense of futility embodied in the agonies of the dying ox or Jupiter's wanton destruction of the harvest. The one thing that is clear is that the life of perfect freedom from *labor*, *curae* and *metus* envisaged by Lucretius is impossible. Such glimpses of the philosopher's 'well-fortified citadel' as are offered to us in the *Georgics* – the peaceful ease of the Golden Age, the brief flirtation with philosophical didactic at the end of book 2, the self-sufficiency of the old man of Tarentum, the final glance back to the pastoral *otium* of Tityrus – all lie in the past, or are otherwise unavailable to the poet and his reader. Toil and care are part of the human condition, though we may be able to make something positive of them – to attain the *secura quies* ('untroubled peace') of the finale to book 2 rather than the chaos that dominates the end of book 1, the rebirth of the community symbolized in the *bougonia* rather than the death of the community embodied in the plague. But there is no ultimate security: like the farmer, who must be ever vigilant against the threats of pests and diseases, wind and rain and frost, the human race as a whole is always at the mercy of forces beyond its control, the destructive *furores* of war and sexual passion within, and beyond them the arbitrary caprices of the gods, or of the vast impersonal *natura* which Lucretius tried to set up in their place.

## *The wonders of the natural world*

### Ratio and miratio

To what extent is the natural world susceptible to rational understanding and explanation? To what extent can it be seen as ordered, regular, predictable? Lucretius' answer to these questions is confident and unambiguous. Epicurus taught mankind the fundamental principles which govern the behaviour of everything in the universe, from microscopic atoms and invisible souls to elephants and thunderstorms:

refert nobis victor quid possit oriri,  
quid nequeat, finita potestas denique cuique  
quanam sit ratione atque alte terminus haerens. 1.75–7

He brought back to us, victoriously, knowledge of what can come to be and what cannot – how, in short, the power of each thing has its limit and its deep-set boundary-stone.

The universality of these principles is most clearly illustrated in *DRN* 6, where Lucretius sets out to explain a range of frightening and curious phenomena, from lightning to magnetism. What unites this motley assortment of topics is that all the phenomena discussed have a tendency to evoke fear or wonder;<sup>1</sup> and wonder is a dangerous emotion, leading all too often to fear and superstition:

nam bene qui didicere deos securum agere aevum,  
si tamen interea mirantur qua ratione  
quaeque geri possint, praesertim rebus in illis  
quae supera caput aetheriis cernuntur in oris,  
rursus in antiquas referuntur religiones

<sup>1</sup> The words *mirus*, 'marvellous', and *mirari*, 'marvel', are applied to several of the phenomena discussed: see 6.186, 328, 437, 608, 692, 910.

et dominos acris adsciscunt, omnia posse  
 quos miseri credunt, ignari quid queat esse,  
 quid nequeat, finita potestas denique cuique  
 quanam sit ratione atque alte terminus haerens.

5.82–90 = 6.58–66

For even those who have learned well that the gods lead a life free from care, if at times they wonder nonetheless how everything is managed, especially in the case of those phenomena which we observe above our heads in the realms of heaven, fall back again into their old superstitions and call in stern masters, whom the poor wretches believe to be omnipotent, ignorant as they are of what can come to be and what cannot – how, in short, the power of each thing has its limit and its deep-set boundary-stone.

The original ‘invention’ of religion is attributed in 5.1161–93 to a similar failure of understanding: primitive man looked up to the sky, and saw a terrifying array of inexplicable phenomena, *nubila sol imbres nix venti fulmina grando | et rapidi fremitus et murmura magna minarum* (‘clouds, sun, rain, snow, winds, lightning, hail, and sudden thunderclaps, and huge, threatening rumbles’, 1192f.); he ‘took refuge’ (a very shaky refuge, as Lucretius makes clear in the next paragraph) in attributing all this to the will and power of the gods. Epicurus’ victory over *religio* thus relies on the all-embracing explanatory power of his system, and the exclusion of wonder.<sup>2</sup> Once we have grasped the basic principles, we can understand anything:

cetera quae sursum crescunt sursumque creantur,  
 et quae concrescunt in nubibus, *omnia, prorsum*  
*omnia*, nix venti grando gelidaeque pruinae  
 et vis magna geli, magnum duramen aquarum,  
 et mora quae fluvios passim refrenat aventis,  
*perfacilest* tamen haec reperire animoque videre  
 omnia quo pacto fiant quareve creentur,  
 cum bene cognoris elementis reddita quae sint. 6.527–34

<sup>2</sup> Phrases such as *nec mirum* (‘it is no marvel’), *quid mirum* (‘what marvel?’) and *non est mirabile* (‘it is not marvellous’) recur frequently throughout the poem (e.g. 2.87, 308, 465; 4.256, 289, 858; 5.666, 748, 1056; 6.130, 375, 1012), and *miratio* (‘wonder’) is often attributed to foolish, naive or misguided groups and individuals (e.g. 1.641, 4.592, 6.850). The poet’s strategy is summed up in the phrases *mirari mitte* (‘cease to marvel’, 6.1056) and *mirari multa relinquo* (‘you would cease to marvel at many things’, 6.654). See further Clay (1983), pp. 243–5 and 280f.

As for other things that grow above and develop above, that are crystallized amongst the clouds, all of them, I say, all of them – snow, winds, hail and freezing frosts and the great strength of ice, the mighty force that hardens water and everywhere checks the haste of eager streams – it is very easy to find out all these things and to see in your mind how they come about or how they are created, once you understand clearly the powers that belong to the atoms.

The asyndetic list of phenomena in 529 strongly recalls the similar list in 5.1192; but this time the paragraph ends not in *aporia* but in the strongly worded assertion that all these things can easily be explained.

In discussing Virgil's handling of religion and myth, I suggested that he repeatedly undermines and blurs this Lucretian sense of clarity and order, and replaces it with an atmosphere of uncertainty and unpredictability. Different views of the gods and of their relationship with the natural world succeed each other, but are not finally reconciled. This sense of uncertainty is increased by a pervasive use of hyperbolic language and by the repeated evocation of extreme conditions of one kind or another. Many such passages are designed (more or less explicitly) to arouse the sense of wonder which Lucretius' poem sets out to suppress. Virgil questions the Epicurean view of nature as regular, predictable and easily explicable, and presents us instead with a world which is full of strange, arbitrary or awe-inspiring sights and experiences.

In doing so, Virgil is once again exploiting a tension which lies at the heart of Lucretius' poem – which is indeed skilfully manipulated by the earlier poet in the pursuit of his didactic project. I have said that the *DRN* is insistent in urging the need to suppress *miratio* ('wonder') through the attainment of *ratio*. But at the same time, the poet frequently conveys a strong sense of awe and admiration before the majesty of the natural world. In the proem to book 3, he describes the *divina voluptas atque horror* ('god-like pleasure and awe') which Epicurus' teaching inspires in his breast; in the proem to book 5, he declares himself unworthy to expound the *maiestas cognita rerum* ('the majesty of nature now revealed', 5.7) or sing the praises of its godlike discoverer. The *praeceptor's* description of his own experience not only contributes to Lucretius' praise of Epicurus, but also provides a template for what G. B. Conte has called the 'sublime' reader.<sup>3</sup> We too are to be impressed and awe-struck by the majestic spectacle of cosmic order; in this way,

<sup>3</sup> Conte (1994); cf. Schrijvers (1970), pp. 67–74 and 195–279 and Hardie (1986), p. 171.

the poet demonstrates our need of Epicurean truth, which alone can transmute fear and bewilderment into a sense of exultation before the 'cosmic show'.

The dialectic between these two strategies – the creation and suppression of *miratio* – is particularly clear in the programmatic passage which introduces Lucretius' discussion of the plurality of worlds at the end of book 2:

nunc animum nobis adhibe veram ad rationem.  
 nam tibi vementer *nova* res molitur ad auris  
 accidere et *nova* se species ostendere rerum.  
 sed neque tam facilis res ulla est quin ea primum  
 difficilis magis ad credendum constet, itemque  
 nil adeo magnum neque tam *mirabile* quicquam  
 quod non paulatim minuant *mirari* omnes. 2.1023–9<sup>4</sup>

Now apply your mind, I beg you, to true reason. For something new is striving urgently to come to your ears and a new phenomenon to show itself. But there is nothing so obvious that it does not at first seem hard to believe, and likewise nothing so great and so marvellous that little by little all do not cease to marvel at it.

Lucretius goes on to redeploy the Platonic myth of the cave to make a very un-Platonic point: suppose, he says, that the sky and stars were suddenly presented to us for the first time – would we not be amazed at the sight? But as things are, hardly anyone even bothers to look up at the sky. The argument cuts two ways: on the one hand, the heavens are – or should be – an awe-inspiring sight; on the other, the notion that there exists a plurality of worlds is no *more* incredible than sights which have ceased to impress us because we see them around us every day. The world both is and is not an object worthy of *miratio*.

A similar technique is used pervasively in book 6, where the poet repeatedly creates and deflates a sense of wonder. Phrases which evoke the impressive and even frightening nature of the phenomena under discussion virtually alternate with the formulaic *nec* or *haud mirum* ('it is no marvel').<sup>5</sup> In 121–31, for example, an impressive description of the sound of thunder, which seems to shake the very walls of the world, is (almost

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 5.97–109.

<sup>5</sup> Compare 186 and 489 (cloud-banks); 608 and 615 (the volume of the sea remains constant); 910, 1012 and 1056 (magnetism). The effect of the undercutting technique employed here is well captured by Conte (1994), p. 25, n. 49.

literally) deflated, as the poet explains that the noise is caused by the bursting of clouds, and concludes: *nec mirum, cum plena animae vesicula parva | saepe ita dat parvum sonitum displosa repente* ('it is no marvel, given that a small bladder full of air often makes a small bang in the same way when burst suddenly').

The latter part of book 6, where Lucretius deals with an assortment of terrestrial wonders (particularly the exotic marvels of foreign lands – the Nile, the magnet and the peculiarities of springs and wells), engages critically with a venerable tradition of paradoxographical writing. Collections of strange and wonderful phenomena seem to have become popular in the Hellenistic period, and the curiosities of foreign lands are a standard category in ethnographical writing from Herodotus onwards.<sup>6</sup> In Lucretius' own day, collections of *admiranda* or 'marvels' were produced by Varro and Cicero, though these have not survived.<sup>7</sup> Lucretius takes up this tradition in order to emphasize the all-embracing power of *ratio*: however extreme, however peculiar such phenomena may seem, they can all be accounted for by the movements of atoms and atomic compounds in space. The wonders of distant and exotic lands are usually shown to have analogies closer to home, and to operate on the same principles as the things of our everyday experience.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The fragments of the Greek paradoxographers are assembled in Giannini (1967). On *paradoxa* or 'wonders' as an ethnographical category (and discussion of Virgil's use of the ethnographical tradition), see Thomas (1982a), pp. 35–69; on Greek and Roman paradoxographical writing, see Giannini (1963, 1964) and Myers (1994), pp. 47–59. Myers' persuasive interpretation of Pythagoras' speech in book 15 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* has parallels with my own account of Virgil's use of the tradition: she argues that Pythagoras' speech combines scientific and mythic/paradoxographical elements in such a way as to call into question the explanatory power of both philosophical and poetic accounts of the nature of the world.

<sup>7</sup> See Macrobi. *Sat.* 3.15.8; Pliny, *N.H.* 31.12 and 51. Of the phenomena discussed by Lucretius, marvellous springs and volcanoes were traditional categories in the paradoxographical tradition (see Giannini's index under *mirabilia fontium et fluminum* and *mirabilia de igne*, and cf. Pliny, *N.H.* 2.227 and 236); *Averna loca* (places – such as Lake Avernus – supposedly inaccessible to animals or birds) are included in the collections of *paradoxa* compiled by Antigonos of Carystus (152), Sotion (fr. 3) and pseudo-Aristotle (102), and Antigonos also mentions the flooding of the Nile (162); on the magnet, see Pliny, *N.H.* 36.126, and cf. Apollonius, *Hist. Mirab.* 23.

<sup>8</sup> See especially 548–56 (earthquakes compared to the motion of buildings shaken by a passing cart or a vessel agitated by the movement of water inside it); 624–6 (the evaporation of sea water compared to the drying up of a puddle overnight); 655–64 (volcanic activity compared to common human ailments); 900–2 (the behaviour of an exotic spring compared to that of a domestic lamp). Note also the deflating phrases *sed natura loci opus efficit ipsa suapte* ('but in fact the very nature of the place does the job itself', 755) and *nam de re nunc ipsa dicere conor* ('and now I will try to tell you the truth of the matter', 768) with which Lucretius dismisses mythological accounts of so-called *Averna loca*.



Virgil, as often, reverses Lucretius' critical approach and returns to something more like the outlook of the paradoxographical writers. But at the same time he reworks the Lucretian tension between *ratio* and *miratio*, playing off evocations of the marvellous against passages which suggest a view of nature as regular, reliable and orderly. This latter effect is achieved particularly through echoes of the Lucretian theme of the laws or 'treaties' (*foedera*) which govern and limit the processes of nature.

### *Laws and limits*

Virgil introduces the Lucretian concept of natural law immediately after the proem to book 1, in the first paragraph of technical instruction. Before the farmer begins to plough his land, he must determine what kind of crop is best suited to the soil and climate:<sup>9</sup>

ac prius ignotum ferro quam scindimus aequor,  
 ventos et varium caeli praediscere morem  
 cura sit ac patrios cultusque habitusque locorum,  
*et quid quaeque ferat regio et quid quaeque recuset.*  
 hic segetes, illic veniunt felicius uvae,  
 arborei fetus alibi atque iniussa virescunt  
 gramina. nonne vides, croceos ut Tmolus odores,  
 India mittit ebur, molles sua tura Sabaei,  
 at Chalybes nudi ferrum virosaque Pontus  
 castorea, Eliadum palmas Epiros equarum?  
 continuo has *leges* aeternaque *foedera* certis  
 imposuit *natura* locis . . .

1.50–61

But before we furrow the unknown surface of the land with iron, let us first take care to observe the winds and different patterns of the weather, and then the traditional methods of cultivation peculiar to the place, what crops each region bears and which it rejects. Here grain grows better, there grapes; elsewhere trees bear fruit and green grass springs up unbidden. Don't you see how Tmolus sends us scented saffron, India ivory, the soft Sabaeans their own incense, but the naked Chalybes iron, Pontus pungent castor-oil, and Epirus mares to win Olympic palms? Nature imposed these laws and everlasting pacts on particular places from the first.

<sup>9</sup> Naturally enough, these topics conventionally come first in the agricultural treatise: cf. Cato, *Agr.* 1, Varro, *R.R.* 1.6, Col. 1.4.

These lines introduce the theme of natural fertility and variety, which will be further developed in book 2; but here the emphasis is on the order and regularity of the natural world. Nature has decreed that different things grow in different regions, and the farmer must take account of this 'law' if he is to succeed. Virgil's language here is strongly reminiscent of Lucretius. The phrases I have highlighted in the passage quoted recall concepts which are central to Lucretius' thought in the *DRN*: the notions of law and limit.<sup>10</sup>

Virgil's phrase *et quid quaeque ferat regio et quid quaeque recuset* ('what crops each region bears and which it rejects') most strongly recalls *DRN* 1.586f.:

denique iam quoniam generatim reddita finis  
crescendi rebus constat vitamque tenendi,  
*et quid quaeque queant per foedera naturai* [cf. *Geo.* 1.60f.],  
*quid* porro nequeant, sancitum quandoquidem exstat,  
nec commutatur quicquam, quin omnia constant  
usque adeo *DRN* 1.584–9

Now since, in short, a limit is set to the growth and lifespan of all things according to their kind; and since it is laid down by the pacts of nature what capabilities each thing has, and also what it cannot do; and since the species do not change in any way, but uniformity is always maintained . . .

This is Lucretius' climactic argument for the crucial proposition that the primary constituents of all material objects are indivisible, imperishable and unchanging; this is the only way to explain the invariable, inherited characteristics of living species. Variation is limited (*generatim reddita finis*, 'a limit is set on things according to kind', 584) by the unalterable nature of atomic matter; if this were not so, Lucretius continues, anything could happen and 'there would be no certainty as to what could come to be and what could not' (*incertum quoque iam constet quid possit oriri, | quid nequeat*, 594f.). The notions of regularity and predictability expressed through the metaphors of limit and law are crucial to Lucretius' argument, and to his world-view in general. Thus, as we have already seen, Epicurus' philosophy is also described as the knowledge of 'what can happen and what cannot' (*quid possit oriri, | quid nequeat*, 1.75f.), and ignorance of these same

<sup>10</sup> In addition to the passages discussed below, cf. 2.302, 3.416, 5.56f., 5.310, 5.923f. and 6.906f. for the *foedera naturae* ('pacts of nature'), and 2.718f., 3.687 and 5.58 for nature's *leges* ('laws'). Note also the Lucretian *nonne vides* ('don't you see?') in *Geo.* 1.56.

limits is the cause of superstition and fear (*ignari quid queat esse, | quid nequeat*, 'ignorant of what can come to be and what cannot', 5.88f. = 6.64f.).

The notion of a 'limit' seems to refer in Lucretius' poem to two slightly different things.<sup>11</sup> Firstly, there are the fundamental propositions of physics and ethics which are true everywhere and for all time: nothing can come of nothing or be destroyed into nothing; peace of mind and freedom from physical pain constitute the limit of pleasure.<sup>12</sup> Secondly, there are the regular processes governed by the *foedera* or 'pacts' of this world, determined by its atomic composition. The world is initially created by 'accident': the random movements of atoms in space happen to hit upon a conjunction which results in a stable union (1.1021–8 ≈ 5.419–31, 2.1058–63).<sup>13</sup> But once this union is achieved – and until it breaks down again – randomness is replaced by regularity.<sup>14</sup> The 'treaties' struck between the atoms at the formation of the world ensure that the members of a species all resemble each other and have certain fixed

<sup>11</sup> On the notion of limits in Lucretius and in Epicurean thought more generally, see De Lacy (1969), Long (1977) and Schiesaro (1990), pp. 140–9.

<sup>12</sup> For the notion of limit in the physical sphere, see especially the 'refrain' 1.76f. = 1.595f. = 5.89f. = 6.65f. The metaphor of the boundary-mark (*terminus*) is also used in 2.1087–9 in connexion with the plurality and mortality of worlds. In general, the words *finis* ('limit') and *finire* ('to limit') are extremely common throughout the poem (46 and 22 occurrences respectively): limits are set on the size of atoms and number of atomic shapes (2.479–521); on the divisibility of matter (1.551–83); on the life-span of individual creatures and the world as a whole (e.g. 1.107, 1.584, 2.1116, 3.1078, 5.826, 5.1213). For the limits of pain and pleasure, see esp. 5.1432f. and 6.25.

<sup>13</sup> As Long points out, it is important to distinguish between randomness and indeterminacy: the movements of the atoms are random in that they are unplanned, and have no final cause; but they are not uncaused or absolutely unpredictable. Only the concept of atomic swerve introduces an element of pure indeterminacy: as Lucretius argues in 2.251–93, some uncaused movement must be possible if there is to be such a thing as free will. The element of unpredictability must be kept to a minimum, however (244–50), and is invoked only in this connexion.

<sup>14</sup> Epic. *Ep. Hdt.* 77; cf. *DRN* 5.656–79, 731–50 and 5.1436–9, where Lucretius discusses the regularity of various natural (especially celestial) phenomena as a matter of empirical observation, and argues forcefully that we should not find such regularity wonderful (*nec . . . mirabile*, 'it is not surprising', 666; *minus est mirum*, 'it is less surprising', 748). Implicit in these passages is an element of polemic against the common Platonic and Stoic argument that the regular motion of the heavens provides evidence for divine control of the world (see e.g. Plato, *Legg.* 12.966e, Arist. *De Phil.* fr. 11 Rose, Cic. *N.D.* 2.15, 2.43, Sext. *Emp. Adv. Math.* 9.111f.). The frequency with which the adjective *certus* ('fixed') occurs in the *DRN* (97 times) is also noteworthy; it is used particularly in connexion with the regularity of plant and animal growth (e.g. 7 times in 1.159–214, discussed below). *incertus* ('uncertain'), by contrast, is used almost exclusively of foolish or futile behaviour (e.g. 3.1052, 4.1077, 4.1104), or of counter-factual propositions (1.164, 181, 594).

properties (such as diet and habitat), and exclude the possibility of portentous events such as lightning from a clear sky. Within these limits, wide variation is possible, and change never ceases. Indeed, mutability is itself a 'law', and changes which are elsewhere often attributed to *fortuna* ('chance') – the rise and fall of men and nations – become part of Lucretius' system (2.75–9, 5.1233–5).<sup>15</sup> But there is always a certain point beyond which change and variation cannot go.<sup>16</sup> Though the number of atoms is infinite, the number of *types* of atom is finite, and hence there is a limit on the number of possible combinations (2.478–521): *eadem sunt omnia semper* ('everything is always the same'), as personified Nature puts it in 3.945. The processes of heredity and nutrition ensure that like begets like; and even cultural progress can only reach a certain point (*sumмум cacumen*, 'the topmost pinnacle', 5.1457), before it is succeeded by inevitable decline (like the growth of the human body, 2.1130, or the world as a whole, 2.1116f.).

Like Virgil, Lucretius calls on these conceptions of natural law and regularity at the very beginning of his poem. The fundamental proposition that nothing comes of nothing is supported by a series of arguments relating to plant and animal reproduction (1.159–214): the poet appeals to the predictability of these phenomena as proof that 'certain seeds' are necessary for birth and growth. If there were no 'seeds', any species could be born anywhere, at any time of year; no time would be required for growth and development, and there would be no limitations on size or lifespan; agricultural labour would be unnecessary, since plants would have no need of nutrients. Each point is supported by a series of vivid *adynata*: men would be born from the sea and fish on land (161–4); any fruit could grow on any tree (165f.); babies would instantly become adults and full-grown trees spring from the earth (186f.); human beings might

<sup>15</sup> Cf. 2.871–85, 991–1022; 5.828–36. For the *topos*, see e.g. Enn. *Ann.* 312f. Sk., Hor. *Carm.* 1.34.12–16 and 1.35.1–16, Juv. 7.197f., Tac. *Hist.* 4.47.3.

<sup>16</sup> On the concept of variation within limits, see especially De Lacy (1969), who compares Philodemus, *De Signis* cols. 21 and 25f. Again, the importance of the concept in the *DRN* can be inferred from the frequency with which the words *varius* ('various') and *variare* ('to vary') are used (69 and 17 occurrences respectively), alongside *finis/finire* ('limit'). Particularly stressed are the variety of atomic shapes (e.g. 2.333–80, 3.31–3 = 4.26–8); of animal species and variation between individuals (e.g. 2.342–76, 5.791f.); and of the senses and their objects (e.g. 2.443, 4.489–95, 5.1058). All three have their limits: the number of atomic shapes is finite, and this in turn means that the range of sensory experience is limited (2.478–521), while variation amongst humans and animals is limited by the processes of nutrition and reproduction, which means that there are no giants, monsters or other prodigies (e.g. 1.199–204, 2.700–17, 3.746f.).

grow to gigantic size, or live for centuries (199–204); crops would spring up spontaneously (213f.). This whole passage is a crucial intertext for the *Georgics*, and one that we will find Virgil coming back to again and again. In the paragraph under discussion, the idea that each crop grows best in a specific region resembles, in general terms, the Lucretian argument that things can come into being only where the appropriate materials are to be found:

at nunc seminibus quia certis quaeque creantur,  
inde enascitur atque oras in luminis exit,  
materies ubi inest cuiusque et corpora prima;  
atque hac re nequeunt ex omnibus omnia gigni,  
quod certis in rebus<sup>17</sup> inest secreta facultas.

DRN 1.169–73

But as it is, since everything grows from fixed seeds, they are born and emerge into the shores of the daylight in the place where the necessary materials and primary elements are; and in this way everything cannot come from everything, because different capacities subsist in particular things.

The opening gesture of continuity with the technical prose tradition<sup>18</sup> is thus programmatically combined with the Lucretian theme of regularity, order and predictability. The concept of variation within natural limits is clearly established at the outset, only to be blurred and complicated as the poem proceeds. These limits will be transgressed in various ways in books 2 and 3; but already in the first book there are hints of what is to come. As we saw in chapter 3, Virgil also complicates the picture by playing off the demythologized world-view of Lucretius against Hesiodic and Aratean conceptions of divine justice and providence. The process begins immediately after the lines we have been focussing on. In lines 61–3, Virgil dates the existence of these natural laws from the time of Deucalion and his re-creation of the human race after the Flood. The juxtaposition is remarkable: the Lucretian conception of ‘nature’ as a set of mechanical processes, not subject to any kind of divine control, is abruptly brought into conflict with the mythological world-view.<sup>19</sup> The effect is all the more striking in that Lucretius’ demythologized version of the Deucalion

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *certis . . . locis*, ‘in particular places’, *Geo.* 1.60f. A closer parallel for the Virgilian phrase is 3.618f., *certa loca ad nascendum reddita cuique | sunt*, ‘fixed places are determined for the birth of each thing’.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. n. 9 above. <sup>19</sup> Cf. p. 60 above.

myth also follows on an emphatic statement of natural regularity. Having denied that composite monsters can ever have existed, even in the period when animals and humans first sprang from the earth, Lucretius concludes:

sed res quaeque suo ritu procedit et omnes  
foedere naturae certo discrimina servant. 5.923f.

But all things go on in their own way and all maintain their  
distinctions by a fixed pact of nature.

This is immediately followed by the poet's rationalized version of the *durum genus* ('hard race') aetiology in 925f.: for Lucretius, primitive man was 'hard' simply because he sprang from the hard earth, not because he was literally created out of a stone. By reintroducing the mythological explanation, Virgil is already undermining the note of Lucretian rationalism sounded in the preceding lines; natural regularity itself is traced back to a transformation that would be an absolute violation of nature's laws in Lucretian terms.

Throughout the remainder of the first book, the emphasis is generally on the factors – both natural and supernatural – which limit the farmer's efforts to maintain and enhance the fertility of the earth. The theme is Lucretian in itself: we have already noted the argument in *DRN* 1.159–83 that specific crops are associated with specific places and seasons; and the hardships of contemporary agriculture are used as evidence for a gradual decline in the earth's fertility – and as an argument against divine providence – in 2.1150–74, 5.206–17 and elsewhere. But Virgil combines the Lucretian notion of natural decline (197–203)<sup>20</sup> with a mythological account of the end of the Golden Age (121–59), and insists on the need for piety as well as hard work in overcoming the obstacles to agricultural success. The concept of natural regularity, which recurs particularly in connexion with the weather signs at the end of the book,<sup>21</sup> is also problematized: at the outset, the existence of the signs is attributed to a providential Jupiter (353); but sixty lines later (415–23) the poet denies that animals are divinely inspired to predict the weather, and gives us a pseudo-scientific explanation instead.<sup>22</sup> There is a constant equivocation between the idea that laws

<sup>20</sup> On the dissonant note struck by *fatis* ('fate') in 199, see p. 164 above.

<sup>21</sup> Note especially *certis* ('fixed', 351, 394); *certissima* ('firmly fixed', 439).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Epic. Ep. Pyth.* 115f. for the Epicurean view. The distinction between the scientific and mythological/religious accounts is once again blurred by the reference to Jupiter in 418. See further pp. 83–4 above.

and limits are imposed by nature, and the idea that they are imposed by the gods, particularly Jupiter; and there are also hints that the gods can, if they so desire, transcend natural limits and enable the farmer to do so. The miraculous power of the gods is first indicated in the proem, where the agricultural deities are appealed to collectively as guardians of the fields, who nourish the crops and bring rain in season (1.21–3). The idea that the gods control the weather is of course anathema to Lucretius, who explains in book 6 how clouds release rain of their own accord;<sup>23</sup> even more remarkable is Virgil's phrase *novas alitis non ullo semine fruges* ('you nourish new fruits which grow without seed', 22). As Thomas notes (*ad loc.*), the phrase combines the vocabulary of Golden Age spontaneity with the 'scientific' theory of spontaneous generation;<sup>24</sup> but it also strikingly reverses Lucretius' opening argument that nothing can come of nothing *divinitus* ('by divine agency', 1.150) and the whole series of 'proofs' in 159–214. Again, then, the Lucretian emphasis of the first technical paragraph is undermined: it may be true in general, as Lucretius argues, that plant and animal growth is regular and governed by natural law; but the gods apparently have the power to transcend natural law at will.

Something of the marvellous power of the gods seems to be transferred to the farmer in 100–3, where a Hesiodic recommendation to pray for good weather is balanced by an encouraging image of the success that can be achieved with divine favour: *nullo tantum se Mysia cultu | iactat et ipsa suas mirantur Gargara messis* ('no cultivation can make Mysia boast so much, and even Gargara marvels at its own harvest'). The personification, and the image of the land marvelling at its own productivity, looks forward to book 2,<sup>25</sup> where, as we shall see, the farmer is portrayed as exercising an almost miraculous mastery over the natural world. Here, however, the emphasis is still very much on the farmer's dependence on the goodwill of the gods, whose immense power seems to be manifested both in the regularity and order of the constellations and weather signs, and in apparently arbitrary acts of destruction such as the storm described in 316–34. The two aspects come together in the finale, where the catalogue of terrifying prodigies which marked the murder of Julius Caesar are seen both as reliable signs (463–5, 471) and as transgressions of the natural order. The catalogue as a whole provides a kind of antithesis to Lucretius' attempt in *DRN* 6 to explain extraordinary phenomena like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and lightning in rational terms, and to

<sup>23</sup> For Lucretian phrasing in line 23, see p. 31 above.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. 1.127f., 2.11 and 2.47.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. especially 2.82.

deny that there is anything wonderful or supernatural about them.<sup>26</sup> Virgil actually draws attention to the weird and unnatural character of the prodigies through his hyperbolic language,<sup>27</sup> through the resonances of the mythological imagery of vv. 471–3, and through the horrified exclamation *infandum!* ('unspeakable!') in 479. The reaction of the future farmer to his strange 'crop' of bones and rusty armour is also significant: he is amazed (*mirabitur*, 497).<sup>28</sup> The contrast with Lucretius' stance is most explicit in the phrase *simulacra modis pallentia miris* ('phantoms, strangely pale', 477), a direct quotation from Lucretius' mocking account of Ennius' inconsistent eschatology (*DRN* 1.123). The sarcasm of Lucretius' tone has completely disappeared in the Virgilian context: *miratio* is indeed an appropriate reaction to the horrific events which Virgil describes.<sup>29</sup> We have come a long way from the ordered world and the laws of nature with which the book began; at the end of the book, divine anger and human perversity have conspired to produce a chaos in which natural limits seem no longer to exist, and the farmer's efforts to create order are overwhelmed by forces far beyond his control.<sup>30</sup>

### *The farmer as wonder-worker*

Book 2 begins, once again, with the Lucretian theme of variety and limits. This time, however, the emphasis is on the farmer's ability to transcend those limits and bend the natural world to his own will.

<sup>26</sup> Many of the prodigious phenomena listed by Virgil are specifically dealt with by Lucretius in book 6 or elsewhere in the poem: see p. 120, n. 14 above.

<sup>27</sup> Note especially the references to frequency in 471, 476, 485, 487 and 488: each of these portentous phenomena occurs not once but many times. The portents also extend to land, sea (469) and sky (474, 487f.), and from south (Sicily, 471–3) to north (Germany, 474). Transgression of natural boundaries is particularly clear in 478–80 (human actions attributed to animals and inanimate objects), 481–3 (the Po bursts its banks) and 486 (wolves in cities); note also that rivers standing still or flowing backwards (479) figure very commonly as *adynata* (e.g. Hor. *Carm.* 1.29.10–12, Prop. 2.15.33, Ov. *Tr.* 1.8.1; for Latin versions of the Greek proverb ἄνω ποταμῶν ('rivers will flow backwards'), see Otto (1890), p. 139).

<sup>28</sup> Hardie (1996), p. 109 and n. 26, points out that this image of 'reemergence from the grave' parallels the *bougonia* at the end of book 4, which is also strongly marked as a *thauma* (*modis* ... *miris*, 'strangely', 309; *dictu mirabile monstrum*, 'a prodigy strange to relate', 554).

<sup>29</sup> It seems probable that Lucretius, in turn, is quoting Ennius (cf. Skutsch (1985), p. 155, Wigodsky (1972), p. 73 and n. 368); if so, Virgil has presumably restored something like the mood of the original Ennian context; but Lucretius' sardonic quotation will still remain in the background of the Virgilian passage.

<sup>30</sup> Note especially the destruction of agricultural land in 471 and 481–3, and the beating of scythes into swords in 508.



This is particularly true of the first main division of the book, the discussion of different kinds of tree and appropriate methods of propagation, which culminates in the *laudes Italiae* in 136–76.<sup>31</sup> Of the first six paragraphs following the proem, four open with Lucretian ‘mottoes’,<sup>32</sup> and the Lucretian themes of variety and limits resonate through this whole section of the book. Three passages are particularly important: *DRN* 1.159–214, which deals (as we have seen) with the regular growth of plants and animals; 2.342–80, where Lucretius points to the endless variations between living things – even of the same species – as evidence for the underlying variety of atomic shapes; and 5.878–924, where differences between species are adduced in order to prove that composite monsters cannot ever have existed.

In all three passages, Lucretius is concerned with the regularity and variety inherent primarily in natural processes; Virgil, however, combines this theme with the idea of human ascendancy over nature which is developed in a fourth Lucretian passage, 5.1361–78. Here, Lucretius describes how man at first learned the art of agriculture from observing natural processes, until he began in turn to ‘tame’ the natural world (1367–9), and to create his own orderly and varied agricultural landscape (1370–8). Virgil takes his cue from this rationalizing account of agricultural progress, but gives his own discussion a quite different emphasis by infusing it with a sense of wonder, and implying that the farmer’s ‘taming’ of wild trees not only extends but actually transgresses the limits of what is natural.

Virgil’s discussion opens with a very Lucretian-sounding line, *principio arboribus varia est natura creandis* (‘in the first place, there are various ways of propagating [lit. creating] trees’, 9). *principio* (‘in the first place’) is a favourite Lucretian *incipit*, and the second half of the line combines two phrases from Lucretius’ culture-history, *in variis mundis varia ratione creatis* (‘in the various worlds, variously created’, 5.1345) and *specimen . . . | ipsa fuit rerum primum natura creatrix* (‘the first model was nature the creator herself’, 5.1362).<sup>33</sup> Virgil then lists various natural methods of propagation, before going on to artificial methods: *sunt alii, quos ipse via sibi repperit usus* (‘there are other methods which experience itself has discovered along the way’, 22). The progression from *natura* to *usus* strongly recalls

<sup>31</sup> On the build-up to the *laudes Italiae*, see especially Klingner (1963), pp. 75–81.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Farrell (1991), pp. 194–7.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. also 5.186, *si non ipsa dedit specimen natura creandi* (‘if nature herself did not provide a model for creation’). The adverb *principio* occurs 37 times in the *DRN*, always at the beginning of the line.

the rationalistic basis of Lucretius' culture-history as a whole, and the agricultural section in particular: first of all, natural processes provide the *specimen* or model for human creativity, and then the arts and sciences are gradually refined by a process of trial and error (*usus*, 1452).<sup>34</sup> But the rationalistic tone of these two lines clashes with the way that the actual methods of propagation are described. The lines devoted to natural methods suggest that there is something numinous about the extraordinary vitality of uncultivated trees: in lines 14–19 the *aesculus* and the laurel are each associated with the appropriate god; oaks are held to be oracular by the Greeks (though there may be a note of scepticism here); and groves in general are given the epithet 'sacred'.<sup>35</sup> There is a reprise of the same theme in 63–8, where myrtle, poplar and oak are associated with Venus, Hercules and Jupiter respectively. The emphatically placed phrase *sponte sua* ('of their own accord') in line 11 (repeated – again at the beginning of the line – in 47) also recalls the magical fertility of the Golden Age, and directly contradicts the Lucretian assertion that crops cannot grow *sponte sua*, without human assistance (1.214, 5.212).<sup>36</sup> But if there is something numinous about the vigour of uncultivated trees, the farmer's ability to improve his stock by artificial methods is still more

<sup>34</sup> *DRN* 5.1361–78 as a whole lies behind this paragraph and the next two: in addition to the echo in 36 (n. 38 below), Virgil's emphasis on the variety of techniques has its parallel in 1367 (*aliam atque aliam culturam*, 'one method of cultivation after another'); his personification of trees (particularly the metaphor of 'taming') in 1368–71; and his enthusiastic acclamation of the pleasures of arboriculture (37f.) in 1367 (*dulcis agelli*, 'their beloved fields') and 1376 (*vario . . . lepore*, 'charming variety').

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Maggioli (1995), pp. 116–18 on the sacral character of trees and groves in the *Aeneid*.

<sup>36</sup> The issue is somewhat complicated by the fact that spontaneous generation was widely believed to be a reality, at least under certain circumstances. Lucretius seriously discusses the spontaneous generation of worms from mud, dung or corpses (2.871–3, 2.928f., 3.719–21), and spontaneous generation in plants is dealt with by Virgil's probable source, Theophrastus, in *C.P.* 1.1.2, 1.5 and *H.P.* 3.1.4–6. Theophrastus, however, is somewhat sceptical: he concedes that some plants can be generated spontaneously through 'decomposition or alteration' of the soil, but argues that growth from seed is in fact common to all plants; moreover, apparent spontaneity may in fact be deceptive, since seeds may be carried by the air or in water, or may be too small to see (the willow – one of Virgil's spontaneously generated trees – is specifically mentioned here). A similar distinction between visible and invisible seeds is drawn by Varro, *R.R.* 1.40.1. Virgil's wide-eyed faith in spontaneity contrasts strikingly with these careful accounts. (Cf. Maggioli (1995), p. 30.) *Sponte sua* in 2.47 has a different sense ('uncultivated' as opposed to 'spontaneous'); but the repetition of the phrase is significant. Finally, a slight divergence between the two Lucretian passages cited should be noted: in 5.212, Lucretius claims that crops cannot grow at all without human assistance; in 1.214, however, he makes the more moderate assertion that cultivated crops grow better than uncultivated ones. Strictly speaking, this is not contradicted by Virgil's claim that uncultivated trees are strong but unfruitful; but the emphasis is quite different.

marvellous. He can grow trees without roots (*nil radices egent*, 'they have no need of roots', 28),<sup>37</sup> or from dry wood (30f.), or – most miraculous of all – turn one kind of tree into another by the process of grafting (32–4). We are invited not so much to understand these processes as to wonder at them: the parenthetical *mirabile dictu* ('strange to relate') in 30 gives a clear signal to the reader.

At the beginning of the next paragraph, we return temporarily to a more Lucretian tone,<sup>38</sup> a juxtaposition which points up the contrast with the un-Lucretian element of *miratio* in the preceding lines. Indeed, there is a touch of irony in the phrase *proprius generatim* ('appropriate to each kind', 35), coming immediately after the description of cross-species grafts, which would seem to be the very opposite of cultivating each species 'after its kind'.<sup>39</sup> The phrase once again evokes the sense of order and continuity inherent in such Lucretian passages as 5.920–4:

quae de terris nunc quoque abundant  
herbarum genera ac fruges arbustaque laeta  
non tamen inter se possunt complexa creari,  
sed res quaeque suo ritu procedit et omnes  
foedere naturae certo discrimina servant.

Yet the species of grass which even now spring from the earth, the crops and fruitful trees, cannot be interbred; but all things go on in their own way and maintain their distinctions by a fixed pact of nature.

But Virgil's farmer is apparently able to overcome the natural *foedus* ('pact') which ensures that each species grows according to kind. The practice of grafting enables the farmer to do precisely what Lucretius denies to be possible: *complexa creare*, to create inter-species hybrids.

After the address to Maecenas in 39–46, the note of wonder introduced in the opening paragraph is reinforced in a second catalogue of propagation techniques. Once again, both the vitality of nature and the farmer's ability to enhance it by artificial methods are emphasized: self-seeded trees, though infertile, are strong and sturdy (47–9). The phrasing here recalls Lucretius' account of the growth of the first plants from the earth

<sup>37</sup> Contrast the counter-factual *nil semine egeret* ('there would be no need for seed'), *DRN* 1.160.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. *fructusque feros mollite colendo* ('tame the wild fruits by cultivation', 36) with *DRN* 5.1368f., *fructusque feros mansuescere terra | cernebant indulgendo blandeque colendo* ('and they saw how the wild fruits grew tame on their land with care and gentle cultivation').

<sup>39</sup> The adjective *generatim* ('according to kind') is Lucretian (e.g. 1.20, 227, 229, 597; 2.347; 4.646); only here in Virgil.

(5.780–92).<sup>40</sup> But Virgil has abandoned the Lucretian conception of natural decline which he apparently adhered to in book 1: the early fertility of the earth, which has since been lost in Lucretius' account (834–6), continues – for Virgil – into the present day. Both the dark and the light tones of the Lucretian picture are exaggerated; Virgil plays up the tension between the images of natural abundance which appear periodically throughout the *DRN*<sup>41</sup> and the theory of gradual decline which is explicitly developed by Lucretius here and in the concluding section of book 2.

The natural vitality of wild trees can be improved on by the farmer by transplanting, layering, taking cuttings and, above all, grafting one kind of tree onto another.<sup>42</sup> These methods demand some effort (61f.), but the results can be astonishing: the farmer is a kind of Orpheus-figure here, magically taming trees and constraining them to 'follow' him (52). The climax of the passage is a list of fantastic grafts (69–72): walnut on arbutus, apple on plane, chestnut on beech,<sup>43</sup> pear on ash, oak on elm. This passage has been the object of much discussion amongst commentators, but the consensus seems to be that all these grafts – along with the union of plum and cornel mentioned in 34 – are pure fantasy.<sup>44</sup> Even the graft of apple onto pear (33f.), though possible in theory (since both trees belong to the same family), is dubious in practice. Ancient writers (particularly *after* Virgil) sometimes exhibit an excessive faith in the possibility of grafts between species, but most express some scepticism.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Cf. especially *sponte sua quae se tollunt in luminis oras* ('those that spring up of their own accord into the shores of the daylight', 47) with *novo fetu quid primum in luminis oras | tollere* ('what [the earth] in its new-found fecundity first sent up into the shores of the daylight', *DRN* 5.781f.); the vivid images of rapid and lush growth in 783–7 are summed up in Virgil's *laeta et fortia surgunt* ('they grow up healthy and strong', 48).

<sup>41</sup> E.g. 1.10–20, 252–64; 2.589–99, 991–8; 5.821–5, 1370–8.

<sup>42</sup> On the prominence given to grafting by the elaborate structure of the passage, see Thomas *ad* 47–82.

<sup>43</sup> For the text of line 71, see Thomas *ad loc.* The MSS reading is *castaneae fagos*, but Thomas argues convincingly in favour of Scaliger's emendation *castaneas fagus*.

<sup>44</sup> See Ross (1980), Thomas *ad* 32–4, Maggiuli (1995), pp. 40f.

<sup>45</sup> Columella insists that any tree can be grafted onto any other, but notes that 'the ancients' denied this (5.11.12–15). Pliny (*N.H.* 17.120) claims to have seen a tree grafted with fruit of many different kinds, but regards it as a curiosity and records that it did not live long; he also suggests that grafts work best between closely related varieties (17.103f.). The last point is also raised by Theophrastus (*C.P.* 1.6.1–10) and Varro (*R.R.* 1.40.5–6); the latter, however, accepts the graft of pear onto apple as possible (but Ross (1980) suggests emending the text in such a way that Varro would in fact be denying the possibility); cf. also Prop. 4.2.17f. and Calp. *Ed.* 2.42.3.

More to the point, the phrasing of Virgil's account conveys a sense of the marvellous and portentous, rather than suggesting a practical, familiar procedure.<sup>46</sup> One kind of tree is described as actually turning into another (*vertere*, 'to change', *mutatam*, 'changed', 33), and the personified stock is amazed (*miratast*, 82) at the sight of its strange new fruit. The whole list is a kind of realization of the series of *adynata* invoked by the dying Daphnis in Theocritus' first *Idyll*, and adapted by Virgil himself in *Eclogue* 8.<sup>47</sup> Daphnis calls for reversals of the natural order to mark his tragic death: 'bear violets now you brambles and thorns, and let lovely narcissus bloom on juniper bushes; let everything turn topsy-turvy, and the pine-tree bear pears' (132–4). In Virgil's version, the rejected shepherd-lover calls on oaks to bear apples, narcissus to grow on alders and tamarisks to exude amber. These pastoral *adynata* act as symbols of the speaker's troubled state: disorder in the outside world reflects emotional distress and the injustice of the character's fate (so Nysa's marriage to the unspeakable Mopsus is the occasion for another series of *adynata* in *Ecl.* 8.27f.). In the context of the *Georgics*, these transgressions of natural order become a 'reality'. Again, the predictability and stability of the Lucretian universe are overturned. Virgil's impossible grafts may remind us of the varied sets of *adynata* in *DRN* 1.159–66 which support the demonstration that nothing can come of nothing, particularly the argument that if something could come from nothing, anything could come from anything:

nec fructus idem arboribus constare solerent,  
sed mutarentur,<sup>48</sup> ferre omnes omnia possent.      1.165f.

Nor would the same fruit grow always on the same tree, rather it  
would change, and they would all be able to bear anything.

<sup>46</sup> For grafts as *thaumata*, cf. Plut. *Quaest. Conv.* 2.6.1, where a series of fanciful combinations (including pear on oak and apple on plane) are playfully described as 'more portentous (τέρας τωδέσπερον) than the sphinxes and chimaerae of the poets'. The phrase *saepe . . . videmus* ('we often see') in 32 paradoxically reinforces the air of wonder: as Thomas notes *ad loc.*, the expression 'is employed at a moment when *diffidentia* ['disbelief'] is most likely to be provoked'; cf. 3.274, of wind-fertilized mares. The phrase *carmine ficto* ('poetic fiction') in 45 may be seen as similarly ironic in the context.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. also the Golden Age of *Eclogue* 4 (29f.): grapes will grow on brambles, and oak trees drip honey. Theocritus' pears recur, significantly, in two of Virgil's grafts (34 and 72); and cf. also *rubescere* ('redden', of the grafted plum) in *Geo.* 2.34 with *rubens* ('ruddy', of grapes ripening on brambles) in *Ecl.* 4.29. The *adynaton* goes back to Theognis (535–8); see Dutoit (1936), pp. 9f. and 31f., and Canter (1930), p. 39.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. *mutatam*, 'changed', *Geo.* 2.33.

This is precisely what has happened to Virgil's grafted tree, which marvels at its strange new leaves and fruit.<sup>49</sup> Lucretius' *adynaton* has become Virgil's reality; and again the contradiction is pointed by reversion to a more Lucretian stance in 109, where the end of *DRN* 1.166 is quoted almost verbatim.

The next two paragraphs, which deal explicitly with the themes of variety and limits, each begin by sounding a Lucretian note, but gradually veer again towards the sense of wonder evoked in the discussion of grafting, culminating in the celebration of Italy's marvels in 136–76. The catalogue of grape varieties has obvious affinities with *DRN* 2.342–80, where Lucretius uses the variations within living species as evidence for the 'multifarious variety' (335) of atomic shapes. There is a striking echo in the opening line of the paragraph, where Virgil's phrase *praeterea genus haud unum* ('besides, there is more than one variety') strongly recalls Lucretius' *praeterea genus humanum* ('besides, the human race', 342, also at the beginning of the line).<sup>50</sup> This scientific-sounding observation rapidly develops into a celebration of diversity for its own sake, and the catalogue is rounded off by an elaborately-phrased assertion that the number of varieties is without limit. This claim does not take us very far beyond the Epicurean theory that the number of atomic shapes is indefinitely large, though not infinite; and Virgil's phrasing is in fact quite close to *DRN* 3.316–18, where Lucretius comments on the variety of human personality-types, which he traces back once again to the variety of atomic shapes.<sup>51</sup> But Virgil's insistence on the lack of *any* limit, reinforced by the

<sup>49</sup> The hyperbolic expression *et ingens | exiit ad caelum* ('a huge tree shoots up to the sky') which Virgil uses to describe the grafted tree's rapid growth in 80f. also contributes to the sense of the marvellous here; contrast *DRN* 6.675–7, where Lucretius is combating the conventional view of Aetna as a *thauma* (N.B. *mirari multa relinquo*, 'you would cease to marvel at many things', 654 and *numquis . . . miratur*, 'is anyone surprised?', 655): *et ingens | arbor homoe videtur, et omnia de genere omni | maxima quae vidit quisque, haec ingentia fingit* ('for a tree may seem huge, or a man, and whatever is the biggest thing of any kind that each of us has seen, we imagine it to be huge'). 'Hugeness' is a purely subjective quality, and should not be a cause of *miratio*. A rather similar attitude can be detected in Theophrastus' discussion of 'spontaneous' changes in plants: ταῦτα μὲν ὡς τέρατα καὶ παρὰ φύσιν ὑπολαμβάνουσιν ὅσα δὲ συνήθη τῶν τοιούτων οὐδὲ θαυμάζουσιν ὄλως ('now they regard these phenomena as unnatural prodigies; but in cases where such changes are commonplace, they do not marvel at them at all', *H.P.* 2.3.2).

<sup>50</sup> Farrell (1991), pp. 196f. points out the close correspondence between the structure of *Geo.* 2.83–6 and *DRN* 2.342–6: both poets list four groups or species in two lines, and devote a further two or three lines to the fifth (birds/olives). Cf. 2.1077–83 for a reprise of the variety theme.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. *ego nunc nequeo caecas exponere causas | nec reperire figurarum tot nomina quot sunt | principiis, unde haec oritur variantia rerum* ('now I cannot explain all the unseen causes nor find enough

*adynata* in 105–8, seems again to invite *miratio* rather than to reveal an underlying Lucretian *ratio*.

A very similar pattern is followed in 109ff., where the poet begins with a direct quotation from *DRN* 1.166, but soon turns from discussion of familiar plants and their different habitats to a list of exotic *thaumata* reminiscent of the paradoxographical tradition.<sup>52</sup> This catalogue leads directly into the *laudes Italiae*: even the wonders of the East cannot compete with the rich and varied products of Italy herself. Superficially, there is a contrast here between the exotic and the familiar, between the curiosities of foreign lands – silk, balsam and ebony, the huge banyan and the picturesque citron – and the more mundane crops and animals, cities and harbours of the poet's own *patria*. The juxtaposition suggests the conventional picture of Italy as a land of perfect εὐκρασία ('mildness'), temperate in climate and ideally suited to the cultivation of many different crops. This idea was well on its way to becoming a *topos* by the early Augustan period: comparable set-pieces can be found in Varro, Propertius, Strabo, Vitruvius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Pliny and others.<sup>53</sup> Comparison with these other accounts makes it clear just how exaggerated Virgil's version is: though many features of his encomium are conventional (mild climate, exceptional fertility, variety of agricultural products, mineral wealth, harbours), the hyperbole of the language goes beyond anything in the other versions. The poet speaks not just of a mild climate, but of perpetual spring; not just of exceptional fertility but of animals and trees that bear twice a year;<sup>54</sup> not just of mineral wealth, but of rivers of gold and silver. All these details – along with the claim that Italy has no poisonous plants or large snakes – have caused problems for critics

names for all the atomic shapes which give rise to the variety of sensible objects', *DRN* 3.316–18) with *sed neque quam multae species nec nomina quae sint | est numerus, neque enim numero comprehendere refert* ('but the many varieties and the names given to them are innumerable, nor is it worth trying to count them all', *Geo.* 2.103f.). The monosyllabic line-end in 103 is a Lucretian trait, much rarer in Virgil (cf. Mynors *ad* 1.181 and Bailey (1947), vol. 1, pp. 116f.).  
<sup>52</sup> Both Theophrastus (*H.P.* 4) and Varro (*R.R.* 1.7) have similar lists of extraordinary trees; see also Giannini (1967), under *mirabilia de plantis* in the index. Lucretius takes a side-swipe at this kind of attitude in 2.532–40, where he observes that species like the elephant, which seem exotic to the Roman reader, are really quite commonplace in other parts of the world; terms like 'rare' and 'exotic' are relative (cf. also 6.675–7, quoted in n. 49 above).

<sup>53</sup> Varro, *R.R.* 1.2.3–7, Propertius 3.22.17–42, Strabo 6.4.1, Vitruv. 6.1.9–11, D.H. 1.36f., Plin. *N.H.* 3.40–2 and 37.201f. See also Geffcken (1892).

<sup>54</sup> Dionysius claims to have seen land in Campania that bears thrice yearly (1.37.2), and Varro mentions specific trees that produce two crops (1.7.6; for similar statements in other writers of the paradoxographical tradition, see Mynors *ad loc.*); but Virgil's claims are much less restrained.

since the time of Servius.<sup>55</sup> Most recently, Ross and Thomas have labelled them as 'lies', designed to bring out 'the conflict of these ideal abstractions and the reality of the present'.<sup>56</sup> Certainly, much of what Virgil says here conflicts with the more practical advice offered to the farmer elsewhere in the poem: even within book 2, the seasons are seen to change in Italy as elsewhere, and snakes are specifically dealt with towards the end of the next book.<sup>57</sup> But Ross' terminology relies on the dubious assumption that certain parts of the poem can be thought of as 'true' and others as 'false'.<sup>58</sup> I would prefer to describe the present passage as another instance of the kind of hyperbole which invites a sense of wonder before the marvels of nature. In this sense, the opening contrast between Italy and the Orient is deceptive: Italy is also, in her own way, a land of wonders.

The encomium as a whole has a general similarity with a series of passages (1.252–64, 2.589–99, 2.991–8) in which Lucretius celebrates the creative power of the earth. Virgil's *Saturnia tellus* ('land of Saturn') is the mother of crops and men; Lucretius' *tellus* ('earth') is also called the mother of animals and humans, though he is quick to point out that the earth is neither a goddess nor a mother in the literal sense (2.600–60).<sup>59</sup> Compare Virgil's closing salute with Lucretius' rationalization of the Magna Mater myth:

salve, magna parens frugum, Saturnia tellus,  
mater<sup>60</sup> virum. Geo. 2.173f.

<sup>55</sup> Servius tries to explain away *ver adsidium* ('perpetual spring') as a loose expression for *verna temperies* ('spring-like mildness'), he also attempts to get round the problem that snakes and poisonous plants *do* in fact exist in Italy by emphasizing *fallunt* ('deceive') in 152 and *tanto* ('so large') in 153 (there are snakes, but not big ones; poisonous plants do not deceive, because they are familiar to everyone).

<sup>56</sup> Ross (1987), p. 129. See pp. 115–19 for discussion of the *laudes Italiae*, and compare Thomas *ad* 136–76, 149, 150, 152, 153–4.

<sup>57</sup> Seasons: e.g. 2.315–45, 352f., 401–19; snakes: 3.414–39 (cf. 2.214–16).

<sup>58</sup> The freedom with which Virgil handles his technical sources should at least give us pause before we talk about 'the reality of Italy as it exists in the technical sections of the poem' (Thomas *ad* 136–76); and both Thomas and Ross seem inclined to ignore the fact that the darker sections of the poem (especially the plague in book 3) are just as exaggerated in their detail as the 'praises' of book 2. For a less tendentious analysis, see Perkell (1989), p. 100: 'While these passages [sc. the praises of Italy, spring and country life] express traditional Roman ideals and values, they do so in such a way as to provoke the reader's attention and to challenge his assumptions. In their provocative dissonance from Book I, in their extravagant overstatement, or in their manifest untruth these passages draw the reader's attention to those ways in which life's real ambiguities exceed the truth of facile formulations.'

<sup>59</sup> Cf. also *matris terrai*, 'mother earth', 1.251, *mater . . . terra*, 'mother earth', 2.993.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. the Lucretian anaphora *mater materque* ('mother . . . and mother').



Hail, land of Saturn, great mother of crops, great mother of men!

quare *magna deum mater* materque ferarum  
et nostri genetrix haec [sc. tellus, 589] dicta est corporis una.  
DRN 2.598f.

Therefore [the earth] is called great mother of the gods and mother of beasts, and mother of our bodies too.

Virgil's opening also seems to parallel the rationalizing tone of the Lucretian passage: Lucretius rejects the myth of Cybele in favour of an atomic theory of natural fertility; Virgil turns from the mythical monsters of distant lands to the 'realities' of Italy, whose soil produces crops and wine, olives and flocks rather than armed men sprung from dragon's teeth.<sup>61</sup> The list in lines 143f. has a Lucretian ring:

sed *gravidae fruges* et Bacchi Massicus umor  
imlere; tenent oleae *ammentaque laeta*. Geo. 2.143f.

But [Italy] abounds in rich crops and Bacchus' Massic wine; olive trees and fruitful flocks are everywhere.

*feta* parit nitidas *fruges arbustaque laeta*.  
DRN 2.994; cf. 594

The pregnant earth brings forth bright crops and fruitful trees.

at nitidae surgunt *fruges* ramique virescunt  
arboribus, crescunt ipsae fetuque *gravantur*.<sup>62</sup>  
DRN 1.252f.

But bright crops spring up and the branches of the trees grow green, the trees themselves grow and are laden with fruit.

But we soon move on to features which sound much less Lucretian: *alienis mensibus aestas* ('summer is unseasonably long', 149), for instance, virtually contradicts Lucretius' argument that crops cannot grow *alienis partibus anni* ('unseasonably', 181, in the opening series of proofs which we have mentioned several times before). The rivers of silver and gold (165f.) similarly recall a Lucretian *adynaton*, connected with the rational-

<sup>61</sup> For further Lucretian echoes at the beginning and end of the *laudes Italiae*, see pp. 249–50 below.

<sup>62</sup> Note the similarity in shape between this line and Geo. 2.144; the next two lines begin with a repeated *hinc* ('hence') in both Lucretius and Virgil, and note *laeta* ('fruitful') at the line-end in DRN 1.257. The progression from crops to animals and man in the Lucretian passage is also paralleled by the *laudes Italiae* as a whole.

ized zoogony of book 5. Rejecting myths of hybrid monsters (cf. Virgil's rejection of the dragon's teeth myth), the poet introduces a kind of parody of the Golden Age as a *reductio ad absurdum*: one might as well believe in rivers of gold and gems growing on trees (5.911f.).<sup>63</sup> Later in the book he hints at a rationalization of his own image, when he describes how gold and silver were first discovered after subterranean veins of the metals were melted by a forest fire (5.1252–7).<sup>64</sup> Virgil's image is in some ways closer to the rationalized version, but the hyperbole of his language (*argenti rivos*, 'streams of silver'; *auro plurima fluxit*, 'flows with gold in abundance') suggests the 'myth' rejected by Lucretius. Once again, a Lucretian *adynaton* has become Virgilian 'reality'.

Thus, though the framework of the *laudes Italiae* sounds Lucretian, with its rejection of monsters and celebration of natural fertility, the content and tone are very un-Lucretian. Virgil has played up and exaggerated the positive side of Lucretius' *natura* – as he will later play up the negative side – and so created an image of Italy as a numinous (173–6) land of wonders. Again, too, the passage reinforces the image of the farmer as a kind of wonder-worker who is able to overcome natural limitations (note *extremis domitum cultoribus orbem*, 'distant lands tamed by the farmer', 114, in the lead-up to the *laudes Italiae*). This section begins with a reminder that the Golden Age is past: *nec vero terrae ferre omnes omnia possunt* ('nor can all soils bear everything') recalls the magical fertility of *Eclogue* 4.39 and *Georgics* 1.127f.,<sup>65</sup> as well as the Lucretian theme of limits. But here it seems that the combination of divine favour and human ingenuity can bring about something like a restoration of the lost paradise. Several features of the passage suggest the connexion: perpetual spring, twice- or thrice-bearing crops and the absence of snakes, predators and poisonous plants are all features of the Golden Age or the Isles of the Blessed in Virgil himself or in other poets.<sup>66</sup> So, too, the praise of

<sup>63</sup> On this passage, see further Gale (1994a), pp. 162–4.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. esp. *argenti rivos et auri* ('streams of silver and gold', 1256) with Virgil's phrase *argenti rivos*, 'streams of silver', 165.

<sup>65</sup> *omnis feret omnia tellus* ('every land will bear everything'); *tellus | omnia . . . ferebat* ('the earth itself brought forth everything').

<sup>66</sup> Perpetual spring: Hom. *Od.* 4.567f., Plato, *Pol.* 272a, Hor. *Epod.* 16.53–6, Ov. *Met.* 1.107f. (but cf. Reynen (1965)); twice- or thrice-bearing crops: Hes. *Op.* 172f.; snakes and poisonous plants: *Ecl.* 4.24f., *Geo.* 1.129f., Hor. *Epod.* 16.52; predators: *Ecl.* 4.22, Plato, *Pol.* 271e, Hor. *Epod.* 16.51. Other elements in the encomium, however, belong emphatically to later ages: note especially the walled cities in 155–7, the presence of silver and bronze, as well as gold, in 165f., and the catalogue of warriors in 167–72. This is only an approximation to the lost Golden Age. See further pp. 248–9 below.

spring in 323–45 suggests a restoration of, or continuity with, the mildness of the *novitas mundi* ('the youth of the world'; cf. *DRN* 5.818f.); and the life of the contemporary farmer is seen explicitly as a survival of the Golden Age in the finale (473f., 532–40).<sup>67</sup> The wonderful vitality of nature is such that, with the assistance of human ingenuity, almost anything is possible.

After the *laudes Italiae*, the tone becomes more practical, with less emphasis on the farmer's quasi-magical powers. The vitality of nature continues to be stressed, however (though there are hints of the more destructive aspect which will come to the fore in the next book). The farmer is seen to benefit from this vitality particularly in the vignette at 290–7, where the poet describes a huge oak, whose branches reach to heaven and its roots down to Tartarus. The strength and solidity of the tree contrast with the fragility of the vines described in the next section (especially 343–5 and 362–6), and also provide a counterpoint to the fire depicted in 303–14. The farmer is able to counteract the destructive aspect of nature, and the vulnerability of his crops, by exploiting what is strong and lasting in the natural world.<sup>68</sup> Again, the hyperbolic language suggests that the tree is to be seen as a *thauma*. The roots and branches reaching from hell to heaven recall Homeric and Hesiodic images of the abysmal depth of Tartarus or the monstrous growth of personified Eris;<sup>69</sup> these echoes are combined with reminiscences of a simile in which the Lapiths Polypoetes and Leonteus are compared to mighty oak-trees in the mountains, which stand firm against wind and rain (*Il.* 12.131–4). Virgil's hyperbole is underlined by the comparison: Homer's trees are simply ὑψικάρηνοι ('high-crowned') and ῥίζησιν μεγάλῃσι ἀραρυῖαι ('growing from long roots'), not extravagantly huge like Virgil's *aesculus*. The passage can again be read, in part, as a reaction against Lucretius' demystification of the natural world. In the course of

<sup>67</sup> Cf. p. 170, n. 74 above for Golden Age imagery in the catalogue of forest trees, 426–53. The catalogue also balances and reinforces the catalogue of grape varieties in 89–108, emphasizing the unstinting bounty of the natural world.

<sup>68</sup> The tree is presumably to be used either as a support for vines, or as a source of wood for vine props (see Mynors *ad loc.*).

<sup>69</sup> *Hom. Il.* 8.16 and 4.442f.; *Hes. Th.* 720. Compare also Virgil's *Fama* ('Rumour', *Aen.* 4.177), Cyclopes (3.619f. and 678) and Orion (10.767); the present passage is repeated in the oak-tree simile in *Aen.* 4.441–6. On these 'sky-reaching' passages, and on hyperbole in the *Aeneid* (one of whose functions is to induce *ekplexis* or astonishment), see Hardie (1986), pp. 267–85 and 291f.

his argument that nothing can come of nothing, Lucretius introduces the long-lived giant as an *adynaton*:

cur homines tantos natura parere  
non potuit, pedibus qui pontum per vada possent  
transire et magnos manibus divellere montis  
*multaque vivendo vitalia vincere saecula?* 1.199–202<sup>70</sup>

Why could nature not create men so vast that they could wade  
through the sea on foot and tear apart great mountains with their  
bare hands, or outlive many generations of men?

This may be true of human beings, Virgil implies, but prodigious species can be found elsewhere in the natural world. Of course, Lucretius would hardly disagree that trees can outlive many generations of men; but it is striking that – in inviting us, once again, to marvel at the wonders of nature – Virgil employs language drawn from a Lucretian passage in which the emphasis is on regularity and predictability, and on the limitations imposed on the world by the nature of its primary materials.

Throughout the second book, then, the poet depicts the natural world as a store-house of wonders. Though nature imposes certain limits on the farmer's endeavours, these restrictions are counterbalanced both by the prodigious vitality and abundance of the plant kingdom, and by the quasi-magical arts of propagation. Though the Lucretian notion of variation within limits lies at the heart of the book, the emphasis is on extremes rather than norms: endless variety, enormous size, perpetual spring. Above all, the farmer's ability to cross the boundary between species through the practice of grafting calls into question the Lucretian conception of unbreakable natural laws, which ensure that biological and physical processes recur in an orderly, regular and above all predictable manner.

### *Animals and adynata*

If in book 2 the farmer is seen to be able to transcend the limits imposed by nature, in the third book we find nature herself transgressing those limits. Whereas in the previous book natural vitality was portrayed as an

<sup>70</sup> Cf. also 3.948, *omnia si pergas vivendo vincere saecula* ('even if you went on to outlive all generations'). The phrases *auras aethérias* ('the airs of heaven', 291f.) and *flabra* ('gusts', 293) are also Lucretian; on the latter (which is very rare in classical Latin), see Thomas *ad loc.*

almost magical resource ready for exploitation by the cultivator, now we see its darker side. The vitality of the horse, in particular, is portrayed as a dangerous force, which must be carefully controlled if it is not to break out into destructive (or self-destructive) violence. In this book, it is the farmer who tries to maintain order and continuity,<sup>71</sup> and he must fight against nature in order to do so.

This struggle reaches a head in the two climactic digressions on the power of *amor* and the Noric cattle plague. The twin forces of sexual attraction and disease bring about a series of reversals in the order of nature which the farmer must strive (often in vain) to counteract.<sup>72</sup> Our first warning of the unnatural behaviour which animals (and man) will exhibit under the influence of these forces comes in lines 146–56, where the poet warns the farmer to protect his cattle from the gadfly. As we saw in chapter 4,<sup>73</sup> this passage foreshadows the account of the effects of *amor* on cattle and other animals. The insect is linked with the aetiological myth of Io and her transformation into a cow: so too the animals will undergo a kind of metamorphosis when ‘stung’ by the goads of sexual desire. Io’s madness similarly anticipates the maddening effect of sexual attraction on the animal kingdom as a whole. There is also a more distant connexion with the effects of the plague, implied by the word *pestis* (‘plague’) in 153.<sup>74</sup> It is noteworthy, too, that the gadfly is called a *monstrum* (‘monster’, 152). The word adds to the sense of an unnatural or supernatural threat implicit in the allusion to Juno’s persecution of Io.<sup>75</sup>

The reference to Io, then, already hints at a breakdown of the barriers between species under the influence of sexual desire, which is shortly to be made more explicit. The first part of the attack on *amor*, following the opening epigram on the universal power of sexual attraction (242–4), consists of a catalogue of different species, all of which manifest the maddening influence of *amor* through their savage or (in the case of the human youth, Leander) irrationally reckless behaviour. In most cases, the animals are simply fiercer than usual; but it is striking that the catalogue begins and ends with examples which sound very much like

<sup>71</sup> Note especially 3.65, which recalls the activities of Lucretius’ *natura* in 1.263; cf. pp. 95–6 above.

<sup>72</sup> 3.209–14 (cf. 252–4 for the ineffectiveness of these measures) and 440–69 (cf. 509–14 and 548–50 for the failure of traditional remedies against the plague).

<sup>73</sup> Pp. 125–7 and n. 31 above. <sup>74</sup> Cf. 471, of disease.

<sup>75</sup> The phrasing also suggests an implicit response to Lucretius’ anti-mythological polemic in *DRN* 4.580–94 and in the poem to book 5: see pp. 126–7 above.

*adynata*.<sup>76</sup> The first animal in the list is the lioness, which forgets its cubs and prowls the land in search, presumably, of a mate. The lioness' devotion to her cubs is semi-proverbial: it is usually in their defence that she becomes most savage.<sup>77</sup> The force of *amor* is such as to reverse her normal pattern of behaviour. This opening reversal is balanced at the end of the list by two similar examples. The first is no more than a hint, implicit in the rhetorical question *quid . . . genus acre luporum | atque canum?* ('what of the fierce breeds of wolves and dogs?', 264f.). The fact that the traditional enemies – man's friend the dog and his enemy the wolf – are so casually juxtaposed suggests a similarity between their behaviour which recalls one of the most common *adynata*, friendship between predator and prey.<sup>78</sup> This hint is confirmed in the final example, the deer, which for once 'gives battle' rather than running away. The strangeness of this behaviour is underlined by the juxtaposition *imbelles dant proelia* ('unwarlike [deer] give battle', 265). Finally, the catalogue proper is followed by a kind of coda, in which the poet dwells at some length on the exceptional lustfulness of mares. This characteristic is traced back to, or exemplified by, the mythical mares of Glaucus, which devoured their owner, in another startling departure from the normal behaviour of the species. Virgil also reports that mares are often<sup>79</sup> fertilized by the wind, a phenomenon which is marked explicitly as a

<sup>76</sup> The passage as a whole is based on Aristotle, *H.A.* 6.571b–572a: once again, the comparison points up the hyperbole of Virgil's version. Aristotle notes that all animals become excited at breeding time, and gives as examples stallions (which may bite and throw their riders), boars, bulls, rams, he-goats and camels (all of which fight amongst themselves). Wild animals (bears, wolves and lions) tend to be fierce towards outsiders; and mares are the most lustful of female animals, followed by cows (the process of fertilization by the wind is described at some length). But none of the *adynata* discussed below occurs in Aristotle: there is no mention either of the lioness' neglect of her cubs or of fighting stags, and domestic animals such as dogs are singled out as showing less aggressive behaviour than other species. Aristotle also locates the wind-fertilized mare in Crete; Virgil's version has no such geographical limitation (cf. Varro, *R.R.* 2.1.19, who locates the phenomenon in Spain, and describes it as *incredibilis sed vera*, 'incredible but true'). The myth of Glaucus' mares may have been suggested by Aristotle's brief mention of horses biting, or (as Thomas suggests *ad loc.*) by Varro's story of an unwilling stallion which killed its groom when compelled to mount a mare (*R.R.* 2.7.9); in either case, the transgression of nature constituted by Glaucus' gruesome fate is peculiar to Virgil's version.

<sup>77</sup> E.g. Hom. *Il.* 18.318–23, Hor. *Carm.* 3.20.2, Ovid, *A.A.* 2.375 and *Met.* 13.547f. (Bömer (1982) lists further references *ad loc.*).

<sup>78</sup> E.g. Aristoph. *Pax* 1075–86 (wolf and sheep), Theoc. 1.135 (deer and dogs), Virg. *Ecl.* 8.27f. (deer and dogs), Hor. *Epod.* 16.30–4 (tiger and deer, kite and dove, lions and sheep), Ovid, *A.A.* 2.363 (hawk and dove), Sen. *Phaedr.* 572 (wolves and deer). On *DRN* 3.750–3, see below.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. 2.32 (and see n. 46 above) for the use of *saepe* ('often') in a similar context.

*thauma* by the phrase *mirabile dictu* ('strange to relate') in 275. The phrase sums up the tone of the whole passage: *amor* is portrayed as an eerie, even terrifying force, distorting the characteristic patterns of behaviour which normally serve to differentiate between species and between animals and man.<sup>80</sup>

This transgression of boundaries can be seen once again to contrast sharply with the ordered and clearly-defined Epicurean cosmos of Lucretius' poem. Animal behaviour is frequently called upon in the *DRN* to illuminate the greater complexities of human personalities and social interaction.<sup>81</sup> Lucretius also makes effective use of both traditional and ad hoc *adynata*, many of which appeal to the regularities of reproduction and growth in the animal kingdom.<sup>82</sup> Animal behaviour in Lucretius is predictable to the point of being stereotyped: lions are always fierce, wolves are cunning, deer are timid and swift in flight, horses are brave and keen, dogs are loyal and tenacious.<sup>83</sup> The 'reversal of predator and prey' *adynaton* is specifically invoked in *DRN* 3.741–53, as part of a series of arguments against the doctrine of metempsychosis. If souls could move from one body to another, one would expect the behaviour of animals to vary accordingly:

quod si immortalis [sc. animus] foret et mutare soleret  
corpora, permixtis animantes moribus essent,  
effugeret canis Hyrcano de semine saepe  
cornigeri incursum cervi tremeretque per auras  
aeris accipiter fugiens veniente columba,  
desiperent homines, saperent fera saecula ferarum. 3.748–53

But if [the soul] were immortal and made a habit of transmigrating, animal behaviour would become confused: dogs of Hyrcanian breed would often run from the onset of the horned deer, and the

<sup>80</sup> For the blurring of the boundary between animal and human in this passage, see Gale (1991) and pp. 96–7 above.

<sup>81</sup> For examples and further discussion, see pp. 91–3 above.

<sup>82</sup> Animals in *adynata*: 1.161–4, 2.701–6, 2.822f., 3.750–3, 3.785 = 5.129. Cf. also 5.883–906, where the non-existence of hybrid monsters is 'proved' by appealing to differences between species in behaviour, growth and nutrition.

<sup>83</sup> See again 3.741–53, and cf. 5.857–70 (the survival of different species is attributed to their cunning (wolf), courage (lion), swiftness in flight (deer) or usefulness to man (dogs, cattle and sheep)). The formulaic adjectives which Lucretius applies to different animals are also telling: lions are savage (3.306, 4.1016, 5.862) or strong (5.985, 1310); deer are swift-footed (6.765, and cf. 3.299, 3.742, 3.751, 4.996, 5.863); horses are brave (3.8, 3.764, 4.987), keen (4.420; cf. 2.263–5) and lively (5.883); dogs are loyal (5.864, 6.1222). Cf. Betensky (1972), pp. 20–2.

hawk would flee trembling through the breezy air when the dove approached; men would have no reason and the fierce tribes of wild beasts would be rational.

This argument relies on the assumption that the kind of reversal depicted by Virgil is impossible. So too the regularities of animal diet and nutrition which Lucretius appeals to in rejecting mythical monsters (5.898–900)<sup>84</sup> could equally well be invoked against the myth of Glaucus and his man-eating horses.

The Lucretian theme of variation within limits is effectively inverted in this passage, where all animals are united in displaying perverse and unnatural behaviour. This reversal is pointed up by the categorization of living species in 242f., where the list humans, wild animals, fish, domestic animals, birds recalls similar lists in *DRN* 2.342–6 and 1081–3. In both places, Lucretius calls on the kaleidoscopic variety of living things to exemplify a general rule: variation itself can serve to support the notion of regularity and natural law. Virgil's point is precisely the reverse: the universal ascendancy of sexual desire exemplifies the power of natural forces to overturn our expectations and break down the neat categories which everyday experience might seem to recommend.

The second part of the book follows a similar pattern to the first, in that the climactic reversals of the natural order brought about by the plague are prepared for by an earlier passage in which similar inversions occur. The digression on the herdsmen of Libya and Scythia in 339–83 anticipates the plague, in providing a negative counterpart to the pastoral idyll of 322–38. Where the idealized Italian shepherd lives in harmony with the rhythms of nature, enjoying dew in the morning, shade at noon, cool in the evening, the foreign herdsmen have to contend with harsh extremes of heat and cold.<sup>85</sup> The whole sequence reverses the build-up to the *laudes Italiae* in the previous book, where the exotic wonders of foreign lands are contrasted unfavourably with the more familiar products of Italy.<sup>86</sup> In book 2, the emphasis is on abundance and vitality: the *thaumata* both of Italy and of foreign lands are products of nature or human ingenuity, evocative of richness, beauty and luxury. In book 3,

<sup>84</sup> On animal nutrition, see also 1.812–16 and 2.707–17.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Theoc. 7.109–14 (and Virgil's imitation in *Ed.* 10.65–8), where the Thracian winter and the Ethiopian summer are invoked as the harshest environments a shepherd could face.

<sup>86</sup> Scythia, particularly, can be seen as a kind of anti-Italy, where perpetual winter reigns instead of perpetual spring (cf. 3.356 with 2.149); cf. Thomas *ad* 349, 350, 352–3 and 356.



the *thaumata* of Libya and Scythia constitute reversals of nature, which are impressive because of their sheer strangeness. Whereas in book 2 the εὐκρασία of Italy was seen as the ultimate marvel in a catalogue of wonders, now it seems perilously poised between the extremes of heat and cold represented by Libya and Scythia:<sup>87</sup> the harsher side of the natural world evoked in the ethnographical digression foreshadows the violence of the plague, which will destroy the idyllic peace of the pastoral dream-world in one cruel stroke.

The snow-bound landscape of Scythia is described in terms particularly suggestive of the kind of reversals of nature which are usually regarded as *adynata*. Wagons can drive over (frozen) water, bronze vessels burst open, wine can be cut with an axe (360–6). Pools are ‘changed’ (*vertere*, 365, also used of the fantastic grafts of 2.32–4) into solid ice, and cattle stand frozen in the ‘strange mass’ (*mole nova*,<sup>88</sup> 370) of snow. The bizarre ‘hunt’ of snow-bound deer described in 371–5 suggests a strangely distorted reflexion of the kind of friendship between predator and prey usually associated with the Golden Age. Deer are not hunted with nets or dogs – but only because they can easily be cut down where they stand.<sup>89</sup> The Scythians also enjoy *otium* (‘leisure’) in their underground caves, but it is a primitive, bestial kind of *otium* more reminiscent of the monstrous Cyclopes of the *Odyssey* than of pastoral peace or the virtuous ease of the Golden Race.<sup>90</sup>

A second grim ‘parody’ of the Golden Age occurs as the climax of Virgil’s Noric plague, in 537–47. The lines take their impetus from *DRN* 6.1215–22, where Lucretius explains that scavenging animals and birds either left the unburied corpses of the plague victims alone, or else died after feeding on them. For once, animals behave in an uncharacteristic manner; and Virgil develops this hint into a catalogue of unnatural behaviour which balances and extends the earlier catalogue of the effects of *amor*.<sup>91</sup> Wolves do not attack the sheep, deer roam freely without fear of dogs, and snakes die: this sounds very much like the Golden Age of *Eclogues* 4 and 5, except that the cause of this strange situation is the *acrior*

<sup>87</sup> Cf. also Virgil’s account of the five terrestrial zones in 1.231–9, discussed on pp. 82–3 above.

<sup>88</sup> The adjective suggests another *thauuma*: compare the amazement of the grafted tree in 2.82.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. esp. *Ed.* 5.60f.: *nec retia cervis | ulla dolum meditantur*, ‘nor do any nets lay their snares for deer’.

<sup>90</sup> Homer’s Cyclopes, of course, are cave-dwellers, and the Scythians’ habit of burning whole tree-trunks on the fire is also reminiscent of Polyphemus (377f.; *Od.* 9.233f., 319–24).

<sup>91</sup> The phrase *genus omne* (‘every species’) in 541 picks up *omne . . . genus* in 242.

*cura* ('crueller pain') of the plague.<sup>92</sup> We are also reminded again of the *adynata* of *DRN* 3.748–53, where dogs actually flee from deer.<sup>93</sup> In lines 541–7, these reversals of normal behaviour spread from domestic animals and their immediate environment to affect all the divisions of the natural world: sea, land and sky. Again, there is a transgression of natural boundaries, as fish are washed up on the shore, seals invade the rivers, and birds fall from the sky. This time, it is not so much that animals are behaving unnaturally, but that their usual environment has become hostile to them: fish are 'shipwrecked', as though the sea were not their natural element; snakes seek the protection of the earth 'in vain'; and the air has become inhospitable (*non aequus*) to birds. Here, too, there are reminiscences both of traditional *adynata* and of Lucretian rationalism. Reversals of animal habitats – fish living on land or dolphins in the mountains, and land-animals in the sea – are one of the commonest of all *adynata* in both Greek and Latin literature.<sup>94</sup> The periphrasis *genus omne natantum* ('every species of swimming thing', 541) not only emphasizes the oddity of the situation ('swimmers' on land) but also suggests Lucretius,<sup>95</sup> who uses this particular *adynaton* three times (1.161f., 3.785 = 5.129), precisely to emphasize the fixity of the natural boundaries which Virgil's plague destroys. The birds falling from the air recall a rather different Lucretian passage, the account of 'Avernian places' in *DRN* 6.738–839.<sup>96</sup> Like all the explanations in book 6, this passage is more or less explicitly designed to combat *miratio*, and to substitute a rational, atomistic account of the phenomenon for the mythological *aetia* which Lucretius ridicules in 753–5 and 762–8. It is thus particularly ironic that

<sup>92</sup> Cf. esp. *Ecl.* 5.60f. for wolves, sheep and deer, and *Ecl.* 4.22 for friendship between predators and prey more generally; for the death of snakes, see *Ecl.* 4.24, and cf. *Geo.* 1.129 and 2.153f. Lines 537f. more specifically recall Horace's Isles of the Blessed in *Epod.* 16.51, *nec vespertinus circumgemit ursus ovile* ('nor does the bear growl around the sheepfold in the evening'). Cf. Putnam (1979), pp. 226f.; Miles (1980), pp. 213–15; Perkell (1989), pp. 120–3. Harrison (1979), pp. 20–2 argues that this whole section is a response to the 'poetic challenge' of *Epode* 16, regarded here as later than *Eclouge* 4.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. also *Ecl.* 8.27f. (dog and deer) and 52 (wolf and sheep); and see n. 78 above for further references.

<sup>94</sup> E.g. Archil. fr. 122 West, Men. fr. 720 Körte, Rufinus, *A.P.* 5.19.5f., Plaut. *Asin.* 99f., Hor. *Epod.* 16.34, Prop. 2.3.5–8, 2.15.34; and note especially *Ecl.* 1.59f. The nearest parallels for Virgil's seals are Hor. *Carm.* 1.2.6–8 and Ov. *Met.* 1.300 (both accounts of the Flood).

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Thomas *ad loc.*

<sup>96</sup> Cf. especially 6.744, *praecipitesque cadunt* ('they plunge headlong') with *Geo.* 3.547. The phrase *aer non aequus* ('the air is inhospitable', 546) also suggests Lucretius' second explanation in 830–9: emanations from the *Averna loca* displace the particles of air from around the bird, so that it is no longer able to support itself and falls to the ground.

Virgil goes on to question the efficacy of learning (the healers Chiron and Melampus are helpless, and their skills do more harm than good, 549f.), and to hint – through the tableau of Tisiphone's triumph, 551–3 – that the source of the plague may be supernatural.<sup>97</sup> This is perhaps the moment when the *Georgics* comes closest to an out-and-out rejection of Lucretian *ratio*. Not only do we find ourselves in a world of extreme and violent phenomena, where the seemingly impossible becomes 'reality', but it is one which seems to be beyond the reach of human understanding. Neither the reader nor the Norici themselves can be quite sure of the cause of the plague – is it a divine punishment? If so, for what? Or is it a purely arbitrary natural occurrence? No decisive answer is forthcoming.<sup>98</sup>

Nevertheless, we should not forget that the images of nature's destructive power in book 3 are qualified by (and serve in turn to qualify) the celebration of natural and human creativity in book 2. Both books, in their different ways, exploit and call into question the Lucretian themes of law and limit, and suggest that natural boundaries are fluid and malleable, that the powerful forces of the natural world are open to exploitation by the farmer, but are never fully subject to human understanding or control.

### *Admiranda levium spectacula rerum*

If book 4 is the least obviously Lucretian part of the poem, it is also the book in which we are most explicitly invited to react with wonder to the spectacle which the poet presents to us. In the phrase which I have quoted as the title of this section (from 4.3), the bees are designated not just as marvellous, but as worthy of admiration: the opening lines hold up the hive as a paradigm for human social organization, an element which will become clearer in the second part of the book (following the digression on the Old Man of Tarentum), where they are referred to as *parvi Quirites* ('miniature Romans').<sup>99</sup> Yet the bees' most wonderful qualities are also the ones which separate them irrevocably from the

<sup>97</sup> For discussion of this passage, see especially Freudenburg (1987) and Clare (1995). It is noteworthy that Virgil departs from the order of Lucretius' account in such a way that the failure of medicine occupies a climactic position close to the end of the book (see p. 45, n. 81 above).

<sup>98</sup> For more detailed discussion, see pp. 76–7 above.

<sup>99</sup> The classic study of the bees as paradigm is Dahlmann (1954); for some important qualifications, see especially Otis (1964), pp. 181f. and Griffin (1979). Note also the bees' own admiration for their king (215), which may be seen as one of their less positive qualities (cf. Leach (1977) and Miles (1980), pp. 249f.).

human world, and make this paradigm one which is impossible to follow: their minute size, and their freedom from the tyranny of sex and death.

Within the short proem, the poet plays repeatedly on the contrast between the smallness of the bees and their more impressive qualities: they are 'light' but worthy of admiration, a nation with customs and ways of its own, not to mention 'great-souled' leaders; the theme is a slight one, but one that will bring 'no slight glory' to the poet. Clearly, the play of great and small has Callimachean resonances here: the proem constitutes a reassertion of allegiance to the ideal of 'slenderness' in poetry, after the more grandiose ambitions framed at the beginning of book 3. But there is also something almost comical about the contrast between the 'tiny' theme and the heroic language of lines 4 and 6. A tension between anthropomorphism (which encourages us to see the bees as a paradigm) and distancing runs through the book, particularly the first part, where the smallness and vulnerability of the insects are repeatedly stressed. One effect of this emphasis is to remind us that there are differences as well as similarities between human and apian society.

Virgil continues throughout the book to insist that the bees are amazing and, in some ways, admirable creatures.<sup>100</sup> The ethnographical framework of the account,<sup>101</sup> as well as the highly anthropomorphic language, foster the notion that the hive is to be seen as a model for human social interaction. But at the same time, the qualities which are most explicitly marked as *mira* are those which separate the bees most decisively from the human race: their abstinence from sexual intercourse (*apibus mirabere morem*, | *quod neque concubitu indulgent*, 'you will marvel at this trait of the bees, that they do not indulge in sexual intercourse', 197f.) and the regeneration of the hive by means of the *bougonia* (*dictu mirabile monstrum*, 'a prodigy strange to relate', 554).<sup>102</sup> These qualities

<sup>100</sup> Note especially *mirabere* ('you will marvel', 60 and 197), *admirantur* ('they admire', 215), *modis . . . miris* ('strangely', 309), *dictu mirabile* ('strange to relate', 554). Cf. also *si vera est fama* ('if what they say is true', 42), which (as both Thomas and Mynors remark *ad loc.*) recalls the ethnographical and paradoxographical traditions.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Dahlmann (1954) and Thomas (1982a), pp. 70–92.

<sup>102</sup> The third phenomenon which is explicitly marked as *mirus* is swarming (*mirabere*, 'you will marvel', 60). There may be two reasons for this: first, the 'natural' swarm described here anticipates the miraculous swarm generated by the *bougonia* at the end of the book (cf. *obscuramque trahi . . . nubem*, 'they trail in a dark cloud', 60 with *immensasque trahi nubes*, 'they trail in huge clouds', 557); secondly, swarming was traditionally regarded as a mysterious, portentous phenomenon (cf., for example, *Aen.* 7.64–7, *Cic. Div.* 1.73 (with Pease (1973) *ad loc.*), *Livy* 21.46.2). The phrasing of lines 59f. perhaps hints that there is something miraculous about the swarm: it appears suddenly as if from nowhere, like a cloud in the clear

are 'wonderful' not only because freedom from sex and death is admirable, but also because it is unattainable by human beings or indeed other animals, all of which are irrevocably subject to *amor*, old age and disease, as the poet emphasized in book 3. The bees are in many ways strange and alien, however much they may resemble us in others.

The *bougonia*, which forms the climax of the poem and the connecting link between the two halves of book 4, is elaborately framed as the ultimate *thauma*. Not only is it explicitly called a *monstrum* ('prodigy', 554) and explained only in mythological terms, with no hint of a scientific explanation,<sup>103</sup> but the phenomenon is located in Egypt, the archetypal setting for wonders and romance.<sup>104</sup> The 'colourful ethnographical notice'<sup>105</sup> which serves to introduce the detailed account of the *bougonia* has sometimes been seen as a remnant of Servius' mysterious *laudes Galli*;<sup>106</sup> in fact, however, it performs an effective function in the poem as it stands, creating an appropriately exotic setting for the miracle itself. The eight picturesque lines in which the poet sketches the landscape and its inhabitants contain (or hint at) a number of subsidiary wonders. The designation of the Egyptians as *gens fortunata* ('a happy race', 287) already suggests a connexion with the Golden Age or the Islands of the Blessed, and the mysterious flooding of the Nile which fertilizes the land adds to the effect.<sup>107</sup> There is more than a hint of the *adynaton* in the striking image of painted boats sailing through the fields (289), which recalls and reverses the wagons of the Scythians (3.361f.). More generally, the colourful details (*pictis* . . . *phaselis*, 'painted boats', 289; *pharetratae* . . . *Persidis*, 'quiver-bearing Persia', 290; *coloratis* . . . *Indis*, 'the dark Indians', 293) conjure up an atmosphere of exoticism and fantasy.

summer sky (*per aestatem liquidam* . . . | *obscuram* . . . *nubem*).

<sup>103</sup> Contrast Lucretius' and Theophrastus' more circumspect accounts of spontaneous generation (n. 36 above). *Bougonia* featured in the paradoxographical collections of Archelaus (fr. 11 = Varro, *R.R.* 3.16.4) and Antigonos (19); Varro (*R.R.* 2.5.5) also mentions the phenomenon as part of a list of fanciful stories associated with cattle. On Ovid's account in *Met.* 15.364–7, see Myers (1994), p. 155; on the literary tradition, see further Mynors, p. 294.

<sup>104</sup> Mynors (*ad* 287–8) quotes Pliny *Ep.* 8.20.2: *miraculorum ferax commendatrixque terra* ('a land prolific in and boastful of its wonders'). Cf. 2.116–39 for the East as the home of exotic wonders. It may also be significant that Lucretius' plague comes from Egypt (6.1141; cf. Gale (1994a), p. 228, n. 86), since the regeneration of apian society in the *bougonia* in some ways 'answers' the breakdown of human society in the plague.

<sup>105</sup> Thomas, *ad* 287–94.

<sup>106</sup> See e.g. Williams (1979) *ad* 4.281–314, Coleman (1962), p. 67; cf. Anderson (1933), p. 37.

<sup>107</sup> On *fortunata*, see Thomas *ad loc.* Contrast Lucretius' attempt to account for the flooding of the Nile on scientific principles, *DRN* 6.712–37.

The *bougonia* itself is described in vividly gruesome detail. After a circumstantial account of the heifer's slaughter, the poet depicts the new swarm of bees gradually emerging from the corpse:

interea teneris tepefactus in ossibus umor  
aestuat, et visenda modis animalia miris,  
trunca pedum primo, mox et stridentia pennis,  
miscentur, tenuemque magis magis aera carpunt,  
donec ut aestivis effusus nubibus imber  
erupere.

308-13

Meanwhile the warm moisture seethes in its softened bones, and creatures strange to see – without limbs at first, but soon buzzing with their wings – swarm together, and little by little take to the thin air, until they burst out like rain pouring from summer clouds.

For the last time, as the bees seem to come to life before our eyes, Virgil combines evocation of the wonderful power of nature with Lucretian vocabulary. The phrase *modis animalia miris* ('creatures strange to see') recalls Lucretius' sarcastic account of Ennius' eschatology, with its *simulacra modis pallentia miris* ('phantoms, strangely pale', 1.123),<sup>108</sup> and the footless insects emerging from the corpse have something about them of the monstrous births which are produced in the early days of the earth's fertility (*orba pedum partim*, 'some deprived of limbs', 5.840) – the nearest Lucretius ever gets to admitting the existence of hybrids or prodigies. As we have seen, Lucretius accepts spontaneous generation as a reality, so that *bougonia* would not necessarily be regarded as an impossibility in his terms; but the way that the process is described here invites a very different kind of reaction from the calm detachment of the Epicurean sage.

The *bougonia* also effects the transition between the first part of book 4 and the Aristaeus epyllion – not merely in the obvious structural sense, but also by bridging the gap between technical instruction and mythological narrative. The world of the epyllion is very different from the world of the Italian farmer: the story takes place in the realm of fantasy, where wonders of all kinds are taken more or less for granted.<sup>109</sup> The underwater palace of Cyrene, the transformations of Proteus, Orpheus'

<sup>108</sup> Cf. *Geo.* 1.477 and n. 29 above.

<sup>109</sup> Note, however, *mirans*, 'marvelling', 363 (of Aristaeus' reaction to Cyrene's palace), *miracula*, 'marvels', 441 (of Proteus' transformations) and *stupuere*, 'they were awestruck', 481 (of Orpheus' effect on the underworld and its inhabitants).

magical power over plants, animals and even the world of the dead, and the echoing cries of his severed head as it floats down the Hebrus – all follow one another in swift succession. Most notable for our present purposes are the miraculous feats of Proteus and Orpheus, which recall the terms in which the farmer's relationship with the natural world was described in books 2 and 3. Proteus' metamorphic power, which must be controlled by Aristaeus if the prophet is to be of any use of him, can be linked with the abundant variety of earth itself, and nature's transgression of her own boundaries, against which the farmer had to struggle in book 3.<sup>110</sup> Orpheus' easy mastery of the natural world can be connected with the more optimistic images of the farmer's taming of nature in book 2 – though Orpheus is an unproductive figure, who does not exploit his power to advance the cause of civilization, as Aristaeus claims to have done. The fantastic events of the Aristaeus story are in this sense simply the marvels of the natural world transposed into a different narrative mode.

Finally, we circle back to the *bougonia*, the climactic *monstrum* ('prodigy') which closes the poem. The *bougonia* is in many ways a highly appropriate emblem to stand at the end of the *Georgics*. It encapsulates many of the themes which have run through the epyllion and the poem as a whole: the interdependence of death and life, violence and creativity, the farmer's mastery of the natural world and his dependence on divine favour. It also epitomizes the marvellous and mysterious character of the natural world as it is portrayed in the *Georgics*. The Lucretian cycle of death and life – in which 'streams and leaves and rich meadows turn into cattle, cattle turn into our bodies, and often from our bodies beasts and birds renew their own strength' (2.875–8) – is vividly present in the closing images of new life springing from rotting carcasses; but the readily explicable processes of atomic physics have been replaced by the shifting light and darkness of a world only intermittently accessible to human reason, a world of *mirabilia* and the *dictu mirabile monstrum*.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Segal (1966), p. 315; Miles (1980), pp. 266–9.

## *The cosmic battlefield: warfare and military imagery*

The farmer, Virgil tells us in the finale to book 2, would be truly fortunate, could he but understand the advantages of his lot. For though he may lack wealth and luxury, he enjoys the greatest blessing of all: *secura quies* ('untroubled peace'), far from war and the rumour of war. But this is only part of the story: throughout the poem, the farmer is represented as a warrior, engaged in a constant battle against the destructive and chaotic forces of nature. In this chapter, we shall consider these conflicting images of agriculture in relation to the traditions of both epic poetry and agricultural writing. Once again, however, the main focus of my discussion will be the *DRN*. Like Virgil, Lucretius holds out to his reader the promise of peace and tranquillity, but also depicts the cosmos as the setting for a perpetual war waged between the atoms and natural forces. He asks us to reject the wars and violence which have dominated human history, while accepting the reality of atomic 'warfare'. As we shall see, this paradox, which is so central to Lucretius' text, becomes in Virgil the expression of an insoluble dilemma: if violence and conflict are inherent in the physical nature of the world, can they ever be wholly banished from the human soul or from human society?

### *War in Lucretius*<sup>1</sup>

Lucretius' use of military imagery seems not to derive from his Epicurean sources. Epicurus does not speak of the war of the atoms, or of 'fighting' his philosophical opponents.<sup>2</sup> The concept of warfare, or strife, does,

<sup>1</sup> With what follows, cf. Gale (1994a), pp. 117–27, where I approach the issue from a rather different angle.

<sup>2</sup> Contrast especially the accounts of atomic motion in *DRN* 2.80–141 (esp. the military imagery in 117–20) and *Ep. Hdt.* 43–4; cf. also Epicurus' matter-of-fact series of explanations for cloud-formation, thunder and lightning (*Ep. Pyth.* 99–103) with Lucretius' version at



however, have an important place in the thought of the Presocratic philosophers, with whom Lucretius explicitly engages in his doxographical survey in 1.635–920.

The first two figures in the catalogue, Heraclitus and Empedocles, both gave war a central place in their cosmological theories, and Lucretius seems to play mockingly on their ideas when he depicts both as warriors: Heraclitus is ‘first to enter the fray’ (638), and Empedocles (more impressively) is ‘mighty, mightily fallen’ like a Homeric hero.<sup>3</sup> There are also hints of military metaphor in the language which Lucretius uses to criticize their erroneous theories of the elements: Heraclitus is accused of attacking his own side (*contra sensus ab sensibus ipse repugnat*, ‘he fights with the senses against the senses’, 693), while Empedocles’ elements would inevitably fight against each other (*inimica modis multis sunt . . . inter se*, ‘they are hostile to each other in many ways’, 759f.).<sup>4</sup> But despite his criticisms, Lucretius seems to follow in the same tradition when he uses military metaphors in his account of cosmological processes. A brief glance at the Presocratic conception of war or strife will serve, then, as an appropriate starting point for an investigation of Lucretius’ handling of warfare in the *DRN* as a whole.

In Heraclitus, ‘war’ (*polemos*) stands for ‘the shifting but reciprocal balance between opposites in human life and the natural world’,<sup>5</sup> and can be described as ‘the father of all things’,<sup>6</sup> since this shifting balance is what makes creation possible. For Empedocles, *Neikos* or Strife is one of a pair of cosmic forces: creation and destruction or, perhaps more accurately, combination and separation.<sup>7</sup> Both theories have their counterpart in

6.96–378. For military images in the latter context, see n. 9 below. Velleius’ account of Epicurean cosmology and theology in Cicero’s *De Natura Deorum* is similarly devoid of military vocabulary, despite strong Lucretian parallels in other respects (contrast especially the bare reference to Epicurus’ *vindicatio* of human beings in 1.56 with the strong epic colouring of *DRN* 1.62–79; cf. also *N.D.* 1.54 with *DRN* 2.80–141).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. κείτο μέγας μεγαλωστί, *Il.* 16.776 and *Od.* 24.40.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. also *emineat nequid quod contra pugnet et obstet | quominus esse queat proprie quodcumque creatur*, ‘so that nothing may stand out to resist and prevent the compound from being its true self’, 780f.; *quae manifesta videmus | . . . vi victa perire*, ‘which we see overpowered by force and perishing before our very eyes’, 855f.

<sup>5</sup> Kahn (1979), p. 205. <sup>6</sup> Fr. 53 D–K.

<sup>7</sup> On Love and Strife in Empedocles, see Inwood (1992), pp. 46–52. Love operates by combining or mixing the four elements, incidentally creating human beings, animals etc. on her way to producing the homogenous sphere (frs. 27–9 D–K) in which the elements are evenly mixed; Strife separates out the elements again in his turn. There is still some debate as to whether or not a parallel cosmogony takes place under the reign of Strife: see Inwood (1992), pp. 46–52.

Lucretius' use of military imagery. From one point of view, the chaotic, random motion of the atoms, or the unstable balance of the elements, can be compared to a battle.<sup>8</sup> In another sense, the vocabulary of conflict and aggression is applied only to the destructive forces of nature (particularly the stormy weather which is Lucretius' main preoccupation in the first part of book 6), or to the conflict between creative and destructive forces.<sup>9</sup> This begins to sound very like an Empedoclean cosmos, but Lucretius is careful to emphasize that the two forces are not separable. Whereas Empedocles envisages a cycle in which *Philia* and *Neikos* are alternately dominant over the material constituents of the universe, for Lucretius creation and destruction are simply two sides of the same coin: the two forces are not just foes (2.569–80), but also lovers (Mars and Venus in the proem, 1.31–40<sup>10</sup>); the peaceful sheep and the military manoeuvres in 2.317–32 are equally good analogies for the movement of atoms.

Where military imagery is used in these senses, warfare is regarded, in essence, as value-neutral. The world may be a violent place, but we are not invited to lament the fact, or to worship Love to the exclusion of Strife (as Empedocles seems to urge us to do).<sup>11</sup> Rather, Lucretius encourages us to see that creation and destruction entail each other, and to regard both with detachment:

<sup>8</sup> War of atoms: 2.118–20, 323–32; war of elements: 5.380–95, 436–42. Cf. also 4.1209f. (male and female seed 'fight' to decide which parent the child will resemble) and 6.364–78 (the 'battle' of heat and cold in spring and autumn culminates in the 'forging' of thunderbolts (*fabricanda ad fulmina*, 365)).

<sup>9</sup> Destructive forces: 1.1042–8 and 2.1142–5 (language suggestive of a siege used to describe the gradual breakdown of the world and individual creatures); 2.447f. (the *prima acies* or 'front rank' of dense objects is strong enough to fight off attackers); 2.954–9 (recovery from a fainting fit described in terms of the restoration of order after a rebellion); 4.337–52 ('invasion' of the eyes by light and dark air); 4.1036–1120 (sexual desire compared to a wound); 6.97–8, 100, 116–17, 191–3, 255, 278, 306–8, 329, 571 (military imagery applied in various ways to stormy weather); 6.777 and 1117–20 (noxious effluences described as *infesta*, 'hostile', or *inimica*, 'unfriendly'); note also the use of the verb (*re*)*vinco*, 'defeat', to refer to the indestructibility of the atoms (or elements) in 1.486, 593 and 856. Battle between creative and destructive forces: see esp. 2.569–80, but cf. also the farmer's 'war' with the hostile forces of nature (5.206–17, esp. *subigentes*, 'subduing', 211); and note the characteristic use of the verb *pugno*, 'fight', applied to opposed forces of various kinds in 1.780, 2.205, 409, 794.

<sup>10</sup> For this interpretation of the proem, in which Mars and Venus stand for the *motus exitiales* ('destructive motions') and *genitales autificaeque motus* ('motions which bring about creation and growth') of 2.569–72, see Giancotti (1959), pp. 201–17; Gale (1994a), pp. 219f. Note also that Mars himself is *wounded* by his love for Venus.

<sup>11</sup> Fr. 17.21–4 D–K; cf. fr. 128 for worship of Aphrodite/*Philia* in the Golden Age.

nam saepe in colli tondentes pabula laeta  
 lanigerae reptant pecudes quo quam <que> vocantes  
 invitant herbae . . .

. . .

omnia quae nobis longe confusa videntur  
 et velut in viridi candor consistere colli.  
 praeterea magnae legiones cum loca cursu  
 camporum complent belli simulacra cientes,  
 fulgor ibi ad caelum se tollit totaque circum  
 aere renidescit tellus subterque virum vi  
 excitur pedibus sonitus clamoreque montes  
 icti reiectant voces ad sidera mundi  
 et circumvolitant equites mediosque repente  
 transmittunt valido quatientes impete campos.  
 et tamen est quidam locus altis montibus <unde>  
 stare videntur et in campis consistere fulgor. 2.317-32

For woolly flocks, cropping the rich meadows on a hillside, often wander this way and that wherever the tempting grass calls each of them . . . yet all of this looks blurred to us from a distance, like a white patch resting on the green hillside. So too when great legions fill the plain with their swift movement, summoning up images of war, then glittering light flashes heavenwards and the earth all around is bright with bronze; the ground reverberates beneath the feet of the massed ranks, and the mountains, struck by their cries, echo back their voices to the stars of heaven; and the horsemen swoop around and suddenly gallop through the middle, shaking the plain with their powerful charge. And yet there is a place high up in the mountains from which they all seem to stand still, a bright light resting on the plain.

The violence of the military manoeuvres is no more troubling to the detached philosopher than the attractive pastoral images in the first part of the analogy. *Ataraxia* is to be attained only by contemplating strife from the lofty citadel of philosophy, as the sage is represented as doing in the poem to book 2.<sup>12</sup>

In a second group of martial images, the concept of war is more ideologically loaded. This complex of imagery can be related to the poetic rather than the philosophical tradition. In the long poem to book 1, Lucretius makes it clear both that we are to read his poem as an epic in

<sup>12</sup> Cf. De Lacy (1964).

the tradition of Homer and Ennius<sup>13</sup> (though it will also differ from its predecessors in important ways); and that the theme of this epic will be the exploits of Epicurus, whose triumphant conquest of the universe, and victory over the tyrant *religio* is depicted in 62–79.<sup>14</sup> Thus the philosopher is substituted for the traditional mythical or historical heroes of epic, and his ‘war’ against superstition and ignorance for the literal wars of Homer and Ennius. On another level, the war includes both narrator and reader, who are represented as reproducing Epicurus’ campaign, following in his footsteps (3.3f.). Lucretius continually depicts himself as fighting error or his philosophical rivals (to whom the reader is sometimes in danger of deserting);<sup>15</sup> like Epicurus, he crosses untrodden landscapes (1.926f.; cf. *peragravit*, ‘ranged’, in 74), and the reader, too, is invited to traverse the universe in imitation of the master’s voyage of conquest and discovery (2.677–9).<sup>16</sup> The war of the atoms can also be related to Lucretius’ generic preoccupations as well as his philosophical stance. The *DRN* is an epic of nature, celebrating the exploits of *Natura*, who commands the atoms in their battles, makes treaties and founds the ‘city’ of the cosmos.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See the laudatory references to Ennius and Homer in 117–19 and 124. There is no comparable allusion to any didactic poet apart from Empedocles. See further Gale (1994a), pp. 106–14. For Lucretius as an epic poet, cf. Murley (1947) and Mayer (1990).

<sup>14</sup> On this passage, see especially Conte (1966); West (1969), pp. 57–60; Hardie (1986), pp. 194f. Cf. also 5.43–51, where Epicurus conquers *vice dictis non armis* (‘with words, not weapons’); and 6.32, where he directs his ‘troops’ to the best location for resisting the troubles of life. For *res gestae* as the subject of poetry, cf. 5.1444.

<sup>15</sup> 1.638, 741; 2.748; 5.99, 735; 6.498. Memmius/the reader is in danger of deserting (or is temporarily the opponent) in 1.103, 370, 624, 975f.; 2.1042–3, 1129; 4.914; 5.343. Cf. also the ‘fight’ between *vera* and *falsa ratio* (‘true/false reasoning’) in 3.523–5, or between rival astronomical theories in 5.727–30. *vincere* (‘to defeat’) is one of Lucretius’ favourite words, and is used not only of convincing the reader / ‘defeating’ rival theories, but also of an extended life-span (1.202 and 3.948); of the indestructibility of the *primordia* (1.486; cf. 1.593); of Anaxagoras’ elemental particles (1.856); of defeat in an election (3.997); of one sense ‘correcting’ another (4.481 and 488); of a remedy ‘overcoming’ the disease of love (4.1119); of a stone worn down by dripping water (4.1285); of the softening effect of the sun’s heat (5.1104); and of resolving a doubtful question (6.708). Cf. also 1.1082; 2.605, 955f.; 4.1210; 5.109, 306, 1271, 1321.

<sup>16</sup> The ‘thought-experiment’ in 1.968–83, where the reader is invited to try to throw a spear over the border of the universe, may perhaps be seen as a ‘failed’ version of Epicurus’ ‘campaign’: the imagery here suggests the fetal rites (described by Livy in 1.32.12f.) whereby war was supposed to have been declared in ancient times. Lucretius’ imaginary interlocutor here seeks to go even further than Epicurus had done, and continue the ‘campaign’ beyond the bounds of the universe itself, but finds that he is unable to do so, since no boundary exists.

<sup>17</sup> For Nature’s *res gestae*, see 1.129, 328 (*corporibus caecis . . . natura gerit res*, ‘nature conducts her affairs by means of unseen particles’), 442, 634, 992, 999; 2.242 (*motus per quos natura gerat res*, ‘the movements whereby nature conducts her affairs’), 1069; 3.17; 5.1439; 6.760; and especially 1.478–82, where there is a pointed contrast between *res gestae*, as exemplified by

This complex of images both accepts the value of epic as the highest and most authoritative genre, and also devalues its traditional subject-matter, war. The warrior hero is replaced by the philosopher, and (literal) warfare is dismissed as something unimportant: the Trojan War is invoked merely as an 'accident' of the true realities, atoms and void (I.471–82);<sup>18</sup> the Punic Wars are irrelevant to anyone who was not yet born when they took place (3.832–42); Xerxes and Scipio died, despite their greatness, and they are given a lowly position in the 'catalogue' of dead heroes (3.1025–44), below Homer, Democritus and Epicurus himself.<sup>19</sup>

Lucretius' rejection of the traditional martial themes of epic, in favour of his Epicurean account of the natural world, is neatly illustrated by a series of passages in which he echoes Homeric similes. Homer often compares his heroes to the violent forces of nature; Lucretius imitates several of these passages, but the Homeric simile becomes Lucretius' 'reality'.<sup>20</sup> So, for example, the flood in 1.280–9 recalls Homer's description of the onset of Diomedes (*Il.* 5.87–92); the battle of winds in 6.97f. is related to a simile characterizing the violent clash between Greeks and Trojans (*Il.* 16.765–9); and the clouds which gather round a mountain peak in 6.191–3 are described in language close to Homer's simile for the immovability of the Aiantes, Odysseus and Diomedes (*Il.* 5.522–6).<sup>21</sup> There is sometimes an element of polemic involved: in my first and third examples, Homer attributes the meteorological phenomena to Zeus; Lucretius pointedly substitutes *natura* (I.281), or simply leaves the gods out of the picture, 'correcting' Homer's erroneous view of the world.

the Trojan War, and the body and void (*res in quo quaeque gerantur*, 'in which all actions take place') of which such events are merely accidents. *res in quo quaeque geruntur* is a Lucretian formula (also at 1.505 and 955); the simple verb *gerere* ('conduct', 'carry on') is also used at 1.129, 568; 2.166, 573; 3.27; 5.84, 194; 6.60. For Nature's treaties (*foedera naturae*), see 1.586, 2.302, 3.416, 5.310, 6.906f.; the image of the cosmos as a city is suggested by the frequent use of the phrase *moenia mundi* ('walls of the world', e.g. 1.73, 1102; 2.1045, 1144; 5.119, 1213; 6.123; cf. also *fines* ('border', e.g. 1.670f., 792f.; 3.519f.) and *terminus* ('boundary-stone', e.g. 1.75–7, 594–6)); cf. Hardie (1986), p. 227.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. West (1969), p. 86 for the parodic tone of this passage.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Segal (1990), pp. 171–86.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Thomas (1988), *ad* 1.104–9. Thomas comments on Virgil's similar adaptation of Homeric similes, but does not note that Lucretius does the same thing.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. also 5.1074f. and *Il.* 6.506–11 (Paris compared to a horse); 5.1078–82 and *Il.* 2.459–63 (the Greek troops compared to birds); 6.256–61 and *Il.* 4.275–9 (the troops of the Aiantes compared to a cloud). Once the process is reversed: at 2.325–7 (quoted above), the Homeric narrative of *Il.* 19.362f. is appropriated for use in a Lucretian simile/analogy. Cf. also 6.148f., where a Homeric simile (*Od.* 9.391–3) is echoed in an entirely new context.

The world may be a violent place, but its disorder is emphatically not to be attributed to the involvement of the gods.<sup>22</sup>

In these instances, then, war is devalued as a subject for poetry, compared to the 'war' of the atoms and the philosopher-hero; but at the same time, the language of epic is appropriated by Lucretius to add dignity and authority to his epic of nature. In a third and final group of images, however, warfare is regarded in a wholly negative light, as an *exemplum* of non-Epicurean behaviour.<sup>23</sup>

The opposition between war and (Epicurean) peace is introduced in the opening prayer to Venus, who is asked to bring about a respite from the 'savage works of war' (*fera moenera militai*, 29):

nam neque nos agere hoc patriai tempore iniquo  
possumus aequo animo nec Memmi clara propago  
talibus in rebus communi desse salutem. 1.41-3

Since neither in a time of trouble for our country can I carry on my work with a quiet mind, nor in such a crisis can Memmius' famous son withdraw his support from the commonwealth.

The phrase *patriai tempus iniquum* ('a time of trouble for our country') in v. 41 presumably refers to the series of civil wars which raged intermittently throughout Lucretius' lifetime; but no real distinction is drawn between civil and foreign wars. At the beginning of the prayer (v. 30), the poet asks for peace *per maria ac terras omnis* ('through all lands and seas'), not just for Rome itself. The Roman ideals of conquest and *gloria* are called into question both explicitly and implicitly elsewhere in the poem.<sup>24</sup> The clearest statement of this theme forms part of Lucretius' commentary on the early history of the human race:

satiis multo iam sit parere quietum  
quam regere imperio<sup>25</sup> res velle et regna tenere.

5.1129-30

<sup>22</sup> For further polemical echoes of Homer, see Gale (1994a), pp. 111-14. In addition to the examples discussed there, there may be an element of polemic or mockery in 6.596-600 (recalling Hades' fear that the earth will collapse as a result of the gods' entry into battle, *Il.* 20.61-6); and the formulae κείτο μέγας μεγαλωστί ('mighty, mightily fallen he lay', translated at 1.741; cf. p. 233 above) and μνώοντ' ὀλοοῖο φόβοιο ('terrible fear came to their minds', translated at 4.713), which are used with an element of irony, or to create a mock-heroic tone.

<sup>23</sup> For another Epicurean attack on warfare, cf. Philod. *De Morte* cols. 29.15-17 and 33.9-25.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Minyard (1985), esp. pp. 36-42; Fowler (1989a).

<sup>25</sup> Contrast Virgil's famous statement of Rome's imperial destiny in *Aen.* 6.851-3: *regere imperio populos* . . . ('exert authority over the peoples').

Much better is peaceful obedience than to wish to exert authority  
and govern kingdoms.

This is a direct and provocative challenge to the prevailing ideology of the Roman élite, for whom the *gloria* obtained primarily through military and political office, through the conquest or government of others – the diametrical opposite of the quiet obedience and obscurity prescribed by Lucretius – was an absolute good.<sup>26</sup> The theme runs through the whole poem, especially the proems: in 2.37–54 and 3.59–78, the desire for power and (military) command is diagnosed as a misguided attempt to escape the fear of want and death; and in 1.62–79 and 5.43–51 the vocabulary of victory and conquest is reapplied to Epicurus and his struggle against religion and the passions. Warfare and military command are mentioned several times elsewhere in the poem, always in a negative light. We have already mentioned Lucretius' dismissive references to the Trojan and Punic Wars.<sup>27</sup> The troubled sleep of the military commander is mentioned in 4.967 and 1013–15, and there is a satirical description of a superstitious attempt by an *induperator* ('commander') to placate the gods before a sea crossing in 5.1226–35.<sup>28</sup> To exemplify the distribution of the soul through the whole body, Lucretius gives a vividly gruesome picture of limbs and heads severed in battle (3.642–56).<sup>29</sup> Most striking of all is the long account of innovations in weaponry and the use of animals in war, which dominates the latter part of the culture-history in book 5 (1281–1349). Lucretius takes the opportunity to moralize on the perniciousness of these developments, as he does also in 5.999–1001 and 1423–35. Man's ingenuity in the development of technology has always had the potential to make human life more comfortable (if not to confer happiness, which can only be achieved through a rational understanding of the world and human nature); instead, as often as not, it has merely aggravated the misery of human existence, by enabling men to kill more efficiently, for increasingly futile ends.

At the human level, then, warfare is viewed as a wholly negative thing: it manifests the turbulence – both internal and external – which characterizes the life of the non-Epicurean, and only comes about as a result of the misguided desires and values which are cherished by the majority of

<sup>26</sup> For *gloria* as an ideal of the Roman élite, cf. Brunt (1978); Harris (1979), pp. 9–41.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. also the heavy sarcasm with which the departure from Aulis is treated in 1.100.

<sup>28</sup> For warfare as an un-Epicurean activity, cf. also 2.5f.

<sup>29</sup> Probably based on Ennius' account of the Battle of Magnesia (*Ann.* 483f. Sk): see Skutsch (1985) *ad. loc.*

the human race. The wish to dominate and conquer should be replaced by a calm indifference towards one's social and physical surroundings: true freedom is freedom from fear of death and the gods,<sup>30</sup> not political *libertas*; true *gloria* lies in the conquest of superstition and passion,<sup>31</sup> not in *imperium quod inanest nec datur umquam* ('power which is illusory and never granted', 3.998).

The 'war' of the atoms, on the other hand, is real and unending. Paradoxically, it is necessary to become aware of and to accept the random and violent nature of the physical world in order to escape the randomness and violence of (unenlightened) human life. The non-Epicurean is like an atom: blind, purposeless, wandering ceaselessly from place to place, and clashing violently with his fellows.<sup>32</sup> There *is* a paradox here, but not a contradiction: the secret of attaining *ataraxia* is to accept that nature is violent and destructive as well as creative, and to be able to regard the fact with detachment.<sup>33</sup> But, as we shall see, Virgil's reading of Lucretius is once again a disruptive one: the positive and negative evaluations of warfare and *imperium*, natural violence and human violence, which Lucretius is so careful to keep separate, are recombined in Virgil's text in such a way as to create a complex and troubling picture both of man's relationship with nature and the gods, and of the role of warfare and imperialism in human society.

### *War in Roman literature and society*

Before turning to the *Georgics*, however, I would like to look more briefly at some of the attitudes to war which were prevalent amongst Roman intellectuals of Virgil's day. It has been argued that there was no serious anti-militaristic feeling amongst the élite, or that a clear and unqualified distinction was drawn between civil war (deplorable, violent, corrupting) and foreign wars (desirable or at least excusable, and carried out for the

<sup>30</sup> See 2.1090–2: *natura videtur | libera continuo dominis privata superbis | ipsa sua per se sponte omnia dis agere expers* ('you will see in consequence that nature is free and independent of proud masters and does everything by herself of her own accord, without the help of the gods'); cf. also 5.79, 6.55.

<sup>31</sup> See especially 1.75–9 and 5.49–51.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. esp. 2.9–16 and 3.1057–62 with 1.996–8, 1.1021–8 and 2.80–141 (cf. also the 'wanderings' of the atoms in 2.83, 105, 109 and 4.792; their *certamen* or 'struggle' in 2.573; and their 'blindness'/invisibility in 1.277, 295, 328, 1110 etc.).

<sup>33</sup> See esp. 2.1–13, and cf. again 317–32. For the ideal reader of the *DRN*, the gruesomeness of the plague should not be a problem, despite the pathos with which Lucretius invests parts of his account (cf. Clay (1983), p. 266; Gale (1994a), pp. 227f.).



purpose of spreading civilization and *pax Romana*).<sup>34</sup> In order to avoid over-simplification, and to minimize the (inevitably) prejudicial effect on our reading exerted by the twentieth-century preoccupation with the evils of warfare and imperialism, it may be helpful to explore these attitudes a little further, and to place Virgil's presentation of war in the context of contemporary ideology and literature.

I have already mentioned the centrality of (military) *gloria* to the value-system of late Republican and Augustan Rome. As W. V. Harris observes in his study of aristocratic attitudes to war in Republican Rome, *laus* and *gloria* are frequently referred to by the writers of the period as self-evidently desirable.<sup>35</sup> This is perhaps unsurprising in a society where most young men of the ruling class had some experience of military service, undertaken as a standard preliminary to entering upon the *cursus honorum*, and where seasonal campaigning was virtually an annual event. Success in war was of great importance as a means of gaining personal prestige: Cicero, indeed, takes it for granted that the majority of his readers will assume that military victory is the pre-eminent source of *gloria*, and finds it necessary to argue that civil achievements may (and should) be rated just as highly.<sup>36</sup> The desire for glory (primarily military glory) is often associated with the moral superiority of the early Republic: both Cicero and Sallust complain that this virtuous spirit of competition has been replaced in more recent times by excessive ambition and greed for booty.<sup>37</sup>

Foreign conquest is most often mentioned by writers of the first century in tones of pride: Italy is the mother of sturdy warriors, Rome's world-empire is divinely ordained, and her wars ultimately bring peace to her subject nations.<sup>38</sup> Cicero even goes so far as to claim that Rome's relationship with her provinces might justly be styled a protectorate (*patrocinium*) rather than an empire.<sup>39</sup> Civil war, on the other hand, is

<sup>34</sup> See e.g. Gleason (1991), esp. pp. 178–81; Cloud (1993). Lyne (1983) argues (with reference to the *Aeneid*) that Virgil presents the 'civilizing' war as an ideal, but that his hero proves unable to live up to it.

<sup>35</sup> Harris (1979), pp. 21–7. See e.g. Cic. *Off.* 2.45, 2.85, *Tusc.* 1.2, 1.109f.; Sall. *Cat.* 7.3, *Jug.* 4.5f. *Off.* 1.74–8. Cf. Augello (1974), with further references at n. 15, p. 143.

<sup>36</sup> See e.g. Cic. *Off.* 2.85, *Rep.* 5.9; Sall. *Cat.* 7.3–6.

<sup>37</sup> See e.g. Cic. *Off.* 1.35, 62, 121, 2.26 and 45; *Tusc.* 1.110, *Sest.* 96–101; Sall. *Cat.* 12.4; Caes. *B.G.* 2.14; Virg. *Ed.* 4.17, *Aen.* 1.278–90, 6.851–3; Prop. 3.22.19–22. Catalogues of Roman heroes (in addition to *Aeneid* 6, see e.g. Cic. *Cat.* 4.21, *Planc.* 60) are usually heavily military in character. On the Ciceronian ideals of justice in warfare and fighting 'for the sake of peace', see further Albert (1980) and Botermann (1987).

<sup>38</sup> *Off.* 2.27; cf. *Rep.* 3.35f.

always deplored; but such expressions of horror are often combined with the idea that the Romans should be fighting the barbarian, rather than each other.<sup>40</sup>

On the other hand, the poetic tradition contains a strong element of anti-militaristic sentiment, alongside the note of pride in Rome's imperial achievements. The roots of this negative evaluation can already be found in Homer, who constantly emphasizes the destructiveness and hatefulness of war, as well as the warrior's *kleos* ('glory').<sup>41</sup> In Roman poetry (especially elegy), warfare is not infrequently invested with negative associations. It is always absent in the Golden Age; it is opposed to the life of love and/or pastoral innocence (though the opposition here is not a simple one, since love also *resembles* war); and it is associated with the wealth and luxury which have corrupted traditional morals.<sup>42</sup> Lucretius' uncompromising and wholesale rejection of war may be exceptional, but neither are conquest and imperialism always seen in an unambiguously positive light by Virgil's literary predecessors and contemporaries. As we might expect, attitudes are complex and inconsistent. In looking at Virgil's use of military imagery, then, we cannot assume that the connotations of warfare are *necessarily* either positive or negative: other factors (including intertextuality) must be brought into play.

Finally – before we come, *per longas ambages*, to the *Georgics* – it is worth asking how (if at all) military matters are handled by other agricultural writers. In fact, references to war are relatively few and far between, and mainly fall into two categories. The first is the hackneyed observation that the sturdy farmers of old were also the warriors who made Rome great. The *locus classicus* is Cato's preface,<sup>43</sup> but similar observations are

<sup>40</sup> See e.g. Hor. *Epod.* 7.3–10, *Carm.* 1.2.21–52, 1.21.13–16, 1.35.29–50; Virg. *Aen.* 10.6–15 (and cf. Cic. *Off.* 2.45). On attitudes to civil war, see further Jal (1963), esp. pp. 391–488.

<sup>41</sup> The standing epithets of πόλεμος 'war' (οἰζυρός, 'wretched', κακός, 'wicked', ἀργάλεος, 'oppressive', πολύδακρυς, 'lamentable', etc.) are all negative; see further Silk (1987), pp. 73–8, Edwards (1987), pp. 154–7, Van Wees (1992), esp. pp. 168–82.

<sup>42</sup> Golden Age: Tib. 1.3.47f., Ov. *Met.* 1.97–100; love vs war: Tib. 1.1.51–8 and 73–8, 1.10.53–68; Prop. 2.14.23–4, 2.15.41–8, 3.4, 3.5; war and luxury: Sall. *Cat.* 11–13; Hor. *Carm.* 1.29; Tib. 1.1.1–5 and 73–8, 1.10.7–14; Prop. 3.4, 3.12.3–6. Also notable is Sallust's remark (*Cat.* 2.2) that human life would be less turbulent and unstable if rulers devoted as much attention to the preservation of peace as to the prosecution of war. On *militia amoris* (the 'warfare of love'), see Spies (1930), Thomas (1964), Murgatroyd (1975), Lyne (1980), pp. 71–8. In elegy and other 'humble' genres, rejection of war is of course also connected to the rejection of epic.

<sup>43</sup> *Agr. praef.* 4: *ex agricolis et viri fortissimi et milites strenuissimi gignuntur* ('amongst farmers are found the bravest men and toughest soldiers'). Cf. Cic. *Sen.* 55f., Hor. *Carm.* 3.6.33–44.

made by Varro (3.1.4; cf. 2.*praef.*1–3) and Columella (1.*praef.*13–19), who lists Cincinnatus, C. Fabricius and Curius Dentatus as *exempla* of the Republican hero called from the plough to serve the state. The second area where military language is widely used is description of the community of bees. Varro twice compares the organization of the hive to that of an army, emphasizing the efficiency and discipline with which the insects carry out their daily tasks.<sup>44</sup> The comparison is repeated by Columella (esp. 9.9) and Pliny (*N.H.* 11.20–6 and 53–8). In all three cases, the bees are regarded fairly unambiguously as an ideal of social organization: their resemblance to soldiers lies primarily in their courage, discipline and devotion to their leader.

Columella sometimes applies a military model to the organization of the farm in general: the owner or the bailiff should be like a general, ensuring the efficient running of his ‘army’ (1.1.18, 11.1.17, 12.2.5f.); cattle should each be allotted their own stall, like soldiers in camp (6.23.3). Closest to Virgil’s use of military language is Columella’s occasional metaphorical employment of verbs such as *impero* (‘command’), *vinco* (‘defeat’) and *exerceo* (‘train’),<sup>45</sup> but it seems likely that his usage here is influenced by Virgil’s own; and there is no systematic development of the idea that the farmer is engaged in a kind of battle against (or in alliance with) nature.

Where military matters are mentioned by other agricultural writers, then, the tone is generally positive. The comparison between farmer and soldier suggests toughness, tenacity and disciplined efficiency; and the invocation of the old Republican heroes is designed (quite explicitly by Columella) to elevate the status of agricultural activity.

### *War in the Georgics*

#### War, poetry and agriculture

Virgil’s most overt comments on the relationship between warfare and agriculture come in the big ‘set-piece’ digressions and programmatic passages which punctuate the *Georgics* – the proems and finales, the series

<sup>44</sup> See esp. 3.16.9: *omnes ut in exercitu vivunt atque alternis dormiunt et opus faciunt pariter et ut colonias mittunt* (‘they all live as soldiers do in the army, sleeping and working regularly in turn, and sending out colonies’); swarming is compared to an army moving camp in 3.16.30. Cf. also 3.16.6, 18 and 29.

<sup>45</sup> *impero/imperium*: (of vines) 3.3.6, 4.29.12, 4.24.21; (of cattle) 6.2.10, 6.24.2; *vinco*: 3.12.3; *exerceo*: 2.2.7, 4.3.4, 4.14.2.

of *laudes* in book 2, and the *sphragis* which rounds off the final book. These are the sections of the poem in which critics of the 'pessimist' school (particularly Ross and Thomas) have most often detected contradictions or 'lies'; and, certainly, we do find conflicting attitudes to war and imperialism expressed here.

The most explicit discussion of the relationship between war and (agricultural) poetry comes at the very end of the poem, in the *sphragis*. I suggested in chapter 5 that there is more than one way of reading the deceptively simple juxtaposition in the closing lines of the poet's peaceful *otium* ('leisure') with Caesar's military victories; one possibility, however, is to interpret the relationship as one of mutual dependence. Virgil – like Lucretius<sup>46</sup> – requires *otium* as a precondition for poetic composition, and Octavian's imposition of law and order enables him to enjoy the peace he needs. Whereas Epicurean *ataraxia* is equated with psychological detachment from the turbulence of war, Virgil evokes the more traditional Roman view of peace as a condition attained through success in war.<sup>47</sup> The implicit rejection of Lucretian pacifism is pointed by a process analogous to the remythologization discussed in chapter 4: Octavian, like Epicurus, sets his course for heaven and spreads peace throughout the world;<sup>48</sup> but the triumphal language used metaphorically of Epicurus' philosophical 'conquests' is here restored to its literal sense. Imperialism is thus reinstated as a goal of positive value.<sup>49</sup>

The *sphragis* also looks back to the proem to book 3, which presents an even more confident picture of the relationship between poet and *princeps*. Here, the poet's metaphorical victory (8–15) is virtually identified with the literal victories which will be the subject of his future poem (26–33).<sup>50</sup> Lucretian echoes in the opening lines<sup>51</sup> serve, once again, to underline the un-Epicurean hierarchy of values which is – at least

<sup>46</sup> Cf. *DRN* 1.38–43.

<sup>47</sup> For this view of *pax*, see e.g. Cic. *Phil.* 7.19, Virg. *Aen.* 1.263–6, Aug. *R. G.* 13, 34.1, and cf. Harris (1979), p. 35; Glei (1991), pp. 123–5.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. esp. Epicurus' conquest of the heavens in *DRN* 1.62–79, and his distribution of *dulcia solacia* ('sweet solace') amongst the races of mankind in 5.20–1.

<sup>49</sup> It is significant, however, that Virgil emphasizes his almost Epicurean detachment here: he is able to maintain a kind of *ataraxia* because he is not engaged in the world in the same sense as the farmer or the politician. Links with the figure of Orpheus also suggest a less comfortable view of the relationship between poetry and the world of *labor*: see further pp. 193–5 above. Cf. also Halperin (1990).

<sup>50</sup> For a more detailed discussion, see pp. 189–90 above.

<sup>51</sup> The triumphal imagery of lines 8–12 again recalls the victory of Epicurus in *DRN* 1.62–79, as well as Lucretius' praise of Ennius (*DRN* 1.117–19) and the poetic programme of 1.926–50 (=4.1–25). For a fuller discussion, see pp. 11–14 above.

temporarily – espoused here: the warrior Octavian replaces the philosopher-hero Epicurus as the poet's source of inspiration.

In these two passages, then, war is given positive value as a source of glory for both poet and conqueror, and as a means of establishing the peace necessary for poetic composition. But in other sections of the poem, Virgil's stance seems more akin to that of Lucretius. This is particularly true of the finales to books 1 and 2, both of which represent agriculture and warfare as *opposites*.

The finale to book 1 laments the neglect of agriculture which has been brought about by the civil wars, and also depicts war<sup>52</sup> as a perversion of agricultural labour: the dead fertilize the land with their blood, and the farmer will one day plough up their bones and rusted helmets in the fields; the land goes to rack and ruin, and scythes are beaten into swords. As I argued in chapter 2, this is very close in spirit to the account of the discovery of metals in *DRN* 5.1289–96: Lucretius contrasts the destructive use of bronze and iron in the military sphere with the creative potential of the same materials in agriculture, and – like Virgil – emphasizes the perversity of human violence and aggression by employing agricultural metaphors in his account of the development of weapons.<sup>53</sup> Both poets depict warfare as the antithesis of agriculture: life, creativity and order are opposed to killing, destruction and chaos. The only hope Virgil foresees here is that Octavian may ultimately be able to restore order. The image in the poem's closing lines of the *princeps* as victorious law-giver perhaps suggests that the prayer of 1.498–501 has finally been granted; but the negative value assigned to warfare at the end of book 1 cannot be entirely cancelled out by the positive tone of the later passage.

In the finale to book 2, Virgil comes very close to advocating the Epicurean ideal of withdrawal from public life – but with certain important qualifications. As we have seen,<sup>54</sup> the *makarismos* in 490–4 expresses something of the openness and the polyphonic quality which I have suggested is characteristic of the poem as a whole. Two incompatible world-views are simply juxtaposed, without any indication that one is superior to or more satisfying than the other. The finale as a whole also combines Lucretian and very un-Lucretian elements: the ideals of

<sup>52</sup> It should be noted that Virgil is not referring *only* to civil war here: note the insistence on the worldwide dominion of Mars in 505 and 511, and the threats from foreign nations in 509. This is, as it were, the negative side of Rome's domination of the world: Roman peace means world peace; Roman wars expand to fill the entire *orbis*.

<sup>53</sup> Note especially the antithesis between scythe and sword in 5.1293–4, and the metaphor *vulnera serebant* ('they sowed wounds') in 1290. See further pp. 32–3 above.

<sup>54</sup> See pp. 8–11 above.

humble obscurity, withdrawal from society, self-sufficiency and *ataraxia* are combined with the presence of *labor* and worship of the gods. The attitude to war expressed here, however, seems thoroughly Lucretian; again, the evils of war are contrasted with agricultural peace:

illum [sc. the countryman] non populi fasces, non purpura regum  
flexit et infidos agitans discordia fratres,  
aut coniurato descendens Dacus ab Histrio,  
non res Romanae perituraque regna. . .

. . .

sollicitant alii remis freta caeca, ruuntque  
in ferrum, penetrant aulas et limina regum;  
hic petit excidiis urbem miserosque penatis,  
ut gemma bibat et Sarrano dormiat ostro. 2.495–8, 503–6

Neither the *fasces* of the people nor the purple robes of kings can trouble him, nor the strife that pits brother against disloyal brother, nor Dacians marching down from the scheming Danube, nor yet the affairs of Rome and kingdoms doomed to fall . . . Some stir up blind straits with their oars and rush onto the sword, or worm their way into the courts and antechambers of kings; one man brings destruction on his own city and its poor household gods, just so that he can drink from a jewelled cup and sleep on Tyrian purple.

This is strongly reminiscent of the proems to *DRN* 2 and 3, where the blessed life of the Epicurean is contrasted with the mental tortures suffered by the rich and powerful, for all their trappings of luxury and authority.<sup>55</sup> The contemptuous tone of *populi fasces* ('the *fasces* of the people') and *res Romanae perituraque regna* ('the affairs of Rome and kingdoms doomed to fall') seems particularly Lucretian;<sup>56</sup> and again, Virgil makes no distinction between civil and foreign wars.<sup>57</sup> The farmer's life is one of peace (*secura quies*, 'untroubled peace', 467) and humble pleasures: the only conflict in

<sup>55</sup> For detailed parallels, see pp. 39–40, nn. 64 and 66 above.

<sup>56</sup> *populi fasces* ('the *fasces* [consular insignia] of the people') echoes Lucretius' satirical picture of the political candidate *qui petere a populo fascis saevasque securis* | *imbibit et semper victus tristisque recedit* ('who is determined to seek the *fasces* and savage axes from the people and always retires disconsolate in defeat', 3.996f.; cf. also 5.1233–5); with *perituraque regna* ('kingdoms doomed to fall'), cf. esp. 2.75–9. (On the meaning of *perituraque regna*, see Thomas and Mynors *ad loc.* The two commentators interpret the phrase differently, but both agree that the notion of kingdoms passing away cannot be isolated from *res Romanae*.)

<sup>57</sup> The two are simply juxtaposed in 495–8. I am unconvinced by Buchheit's attempt (see Buchheit (1972), pp. 137–42) to argue that the passage is directed solely against *corrupt* politicians and not war/politics in general. Granted that 505f. echoes Varius' attack on Antony in *De Morte* fr. 1 Courtney, the lines refer to one individual amongst many (*alii* . . . *hic* . . . *hic*, 'some . . . one man . . . another'), who typifies the evils of political life in general. (Cf. Schäfer (1983), pp. 82f.)

this idealized landscape takes place between fighting goats (526) or between competitors in the rustic games held in honour of Bacchus (530f.).<sup>58</sup> But warfare and imperialism are introduced again in a more positive (or at least ambiguous) light at the end of the finale. With a sudden shift of perspective reminiscent of the leap into the future in 1.493–7, we move from the contemporary farmer to the ancient Sabines, to Romulus and Remus and finally to the Golden Age when war did not yet exist. Here we reach a kind of impasse, as the condemnation of war which has dominated the finale collides with the pride in *pulcherrima Roma* ('fairest Rome') and her warlike sons which will characterize the proem to the next book. The picture of the rustics exercising their *praedura corpora* ('tough bodies') in 531 leads to the thought of the tough Romans of old (a cliché which, as we saw, is present in other agricultural writers); this in turn introduces the theme of Rome's growth from humble beginnings.<sup>59</sup> But Virgil then takes us back a step further to the age of Saturn, before the *impia gens* ('impious race') feasted on animal flesh – or went to war (536–40). No war, then, in the Golden Age, or in the idealized countryside of 467–74 and 513–31. But this rejection coexists not only with a note of pride in the glories of modern Rome, but also with the unsettling suggestion that the very basis of Rome's imperial expansion was the rustic toughness of the peaceful farmers whose way of life has been *opposed* to *res Romanae perituraque regna* ('the affairs of Rome and kingdoms doomed to fall') through the last seventy lines: *sic fortis Etruria crevit | scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma* ('so, no doubt, Etruria grew strong and Rome became the fairest city in the world').<sup>60</sup>

<sup>58</sup> The contrast with the poet's triumphal games in the opening lines of the next book is marked: the triumphalism and luxury of Virgil's games are precisely what is absent from the farmer's. Again, two conflicting ideals are simply juxtaposed.

<sup>59</sup> The phrase *Remus et frater* ('Remus and his brother') is also troubling, in view of the link between modern corruption and the shedding of kindred blood in 496 and 510.

<sup>60</sup> Compare the ambivalent account of the beginning of Jupiter's reign in book 1 (cf. esp. *ante* . . . *sceptrum Dictaei regis* ('before the reign of the Cretan king [sc. Jupiter]', 2.536) and *ante Iovem* ('before Jupiter', 1.125)): there is no explicit mention of war in the earlier passage, but the lack of boundaries or private property (126f.) and the fact that iron is not discovered till later (143) may hint at its absence. Virgil's pride in the greatness of contemporary Rome is the mirror-image, so to speak, of his earlier doubts about the moral status of the Golden Age. It is perhaps also significant that the poet has the more optimistic Aratean version of the myth in mind here: cf. *Phaen.* 130–2, *χάλκείη γενεή* . . . | *οἱ πρότεροι κακοεργὸν ἐχαλκεύσαντο μάχαιραν* | *εἰνοδίην, πρῶτοι δὲ βοῶν ἐπάσαντ' ἄροτῆρων* ('the bronze race . . . who first forged the evil brigand's knife, and first tasted the flesh of plough-oxen'). While Aratus (like Hesiod) characterizes the Iron Age as an era of violence and strife, he seems to allow for the possibility of amelioration (since Justice, even after leaving the earth, is still visible in the heavens as one of Zeus' 'signs').

A similar note of patriotic pride dominates the *laudes Italiae* earlier in book 2. But here agriculture and warfare, far from being opposites, seem to coexist happily and even to resemble each other. Italy is the mother both of crops and of warriors (173f.); Caesar's pacification of the world (*extremis . . . victor in oris*, 'victorious in distant lands', 171)<sup>61</sup> matches the farmer's 'taming' of nature (*extremis domitum cultoribus orbem*, 'distant lands tamed by the farmer', 114).<sup>62</sup> The horse is *bellator* ('a warrior'), and the white bulls of the Clitumnus are destined to become sacrificial victims in the celebration of triumphs (145–8). The greatness of Italy is due equally to the mildness of her climate and fauna (149–54), to the products of culture (155–66), and to the toughness of her warlike sons (167–72). Despite *Saturnia tellus* ('land of Saturn') and *ver adsiduum* ('perpetual spring'), this is not a picture of a primitive Golden Age, but of contemporary greatness. The products of civilization (walled cities,<sup>63</sup> man-made harbours, gold, bronze and silver) are as highly valued as the bounty of nature. There is thus a strong contrast with the finale, where luxury is associated with military conquest and urban life, and both are condemned as the antithesis of the farmer's humble *quies* ('peace'). The two passages taken together display the same kind of ambivalence about the end of the Golden Age and the development of civilization as we detected in the theodicy in book 1. There is also a contrast with the finale to book 1, where war was seen as a perversion of agriculture. The imagery of 2.140–2 recalls the earlier passage: there the farmer ploughs up bones and helmets, here helmeted warriors spring (or rather do not spring) from the ploughed soil:

haec loca non tauri spirantes naribus ignem  
invertere satis immanis dentibus hydri,  
nec galeis densisque virum seges horruit hastis.

These regions are not ploughed by bulls which breathe fire from their nostrils, for the teeth of a huge snake to be sown, nor does the harvest bristle with men's helmets and ranks of spears.

No such portents occur in Italy; the 'crop of men' produced by her soil (*magna parens frugum . . . magna virum*, 'great mother of crops, great mother of men', 173–4) is altogether less unnatural and perverse. The

<sup>61</sup> The phrase *imbellem . . . Indum* ('the unwarlike Indian'), which some commentators have found problematic, can be compared with 3.265, where Virgil is describing the startling effects of *amor* on animals: *quid quae imbelles dant proelia cervi?* ('what of the fact that unwarlike deer give battle?'). An attack on Rome by usually unwarlike tribes displays the same kind of unnatural behaviour; by averting the threat, Octavian restores the world to its proper order.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Thomas *ad loc.* <sup>63</sup> For the lack of fortifications in the Golden Age, cf. *Ecl.* 4.32.



conflict of the earlier passage is at least temporarily resolved by the unity of purpose shown here by farmer and soldier: both contribute in their different ways to the order and *laus* of the Italian landscape.

There is a contrast, too, with Lucretius' culture-history. As we have seen, the opposition which Lucretius sets up between warfare and agriculture as, respectively, futile and beneficial activities has close links with Virgil's imagery in the finale to book 1. Here, however, not only war but several cultural developments which Lucretius associates with war are referred to with apparent approval. Fortified cities are mentioned in *DRN* 5.1108–10, in connexion with the distribution of property which leads eventually to jealous rivalry and violent conflict (1113–42). Navigation (cf. Virgil's inclusion of harbours in 161–4) is paired with war in 999–1006 as one of the causes of death which were absent in the earliest period of human history. War horses feature in the discussion of military innovations at 1297–1307; and the discovery of metals (1241–96) inaugurates the whole section of the culture-history which deals with developments in warfare.<sup>64</sup> Virgil seems to invite the comparison, by echoing Lucretius at the beginning and end of the passage. In both cases, Lucretian language is appropriated in such a way as to emphasize the distance between the ethos of the two poems.

We saw in chapter 4 that the opening reference to Aeetes' fire-breathing bulls recalls Lucretius' rejection of mythical monsters; similarly, at the end of the passage, Virgil phrases his account of his poetic 'mission' in terms which echo both Lucretius' own poetic programme and his praise of Ennius:<sup>65</sup>

tibi res antiquae laudis et artem  
ingredior *sanctos ausus recludere fontis*,  
*Ascraeumque cano Romana per oppida carmen.*

*Geo.* 2.174–6

<sup>64</sup> Virgil's language here seems to emphasize the connexion: see pp. 217–18 above, and Gale (1994a), pp. 163f. and n. 29.

<sup>65</sup> Further complications arise from the fact that Lucretius' phrasing probably echoes that of Ennius' prologue (cf. Skutsch (1985), pp. 147–53 and 167–9), and from the reference to Hesiod in 176. As in the 'aetiology of *labor*', or the proem to book 3, the complexity of Virgil's language mirrors the complexity of the relationship between the *Georgics* and its intertexts: in a passage which is Ennian (and anti-Lucretian) in its patriotism, Virgil echoes Lucretius' (heavily qualified) praise of Ennius; at the same time, he reminds us of his major Greek model, Hesiod, whose characteristically gloomy attitude towards his own homeland (*Op.* 639f.) is diametrically opposed to the enthusiasm which Virgil manifests in this passage. The *Georgics* both is and is not Lucretian, Ennian, Hesiodic. (For a different interpretation of the phrase *Ascraeum carmen*, 'a Hesiodic song', see Farrell (1991), pp. 27–60.)

For you I have embarked on the subject of skills held in honour by the men of old, daring to unseal holy springs, and I sing a Hesiodic song through Roman towns.

*iuvat integros accedere fontis*

...

primum quod magnis doceo de rebus et artis  
religionum animum nodis exsolvere pergo.

*DRN* 1.927, 931f.<sup>66</sup>

It pleases me to draw near to untouched springs . . . first because I teach matters of great moment and hasten to free the mind from the tight bonds of religion.

Ennius ut noster cecinit, qui primus amoeno  
detulit ex Helicone perenni fronde coronam,  
*per gentis Italas* hominum quae clara clueret.

*DRN* 1.117–19

As our own Ennius sang, he who first brought down from lovely Helicon a garland of evergreen leaves, to win him bright renown amongst the tribes of Italy.

The Lucretian language, then, points up the contrast not only with Lucretius' culture-history but also with Virgil's own much more Lucretian stance at the ends of books 1 and 2.<sup>67</sup>

We saw, however, that in the finale to book 2 a note of patriotic pride began to creep in, despite the generally critical tone of the *synkrisis* between city and country life. It is possible to detect similar qualifications in the *laudes Italiae*, although here they are less explicit. There is the merest hint in Virgil's language of the violent forces which rage unchecked elsewhere in the poem. We come back again to the fire-breathing bulls and the crop of helmeted warriors in 140–2. I have already noted that the *exemplum* recalls the imagery at the end of book 1; and I suggested that this resemblance emphasizes the contrast in tone between the two passages. But there is another way to read the echo: there is nothing to stop us from taking it as an ironic reminder that Italy is not always such a peaceful, idyllic place (though it may contain no *literal* monsters). Similarly, the fire-breathing bulls can be linked with imagery used elsewhere in

<sup>66</sup> Cf. also the references to *laus* ('praise', 'honour') in *DRN* 1.923 and *Geo.* 2.174. Virgil's religious language (especially *sanctos*, 'holy', 175) seems pointedly to reverse the pride Lucretius expresses in his attack on *religio*.

<sup>67</sup> Lucretius' rationalizing attack on the cult of the *Magna Mater* (2.600–60) is also echoed at the beginning and end of the passage (see pp. 216–17 above).

the poem, specifically the horse in book 3, which *volvitur sub naribus ignem* ('snorts fire from its nostrils', 3.85). The *bellator equus* ('war-horse'), on the other hand, anticipates the bulls which fight (*bellantis*, 3.224) under the maddening and *fiery* influence of *amor* (*in furias ignemque ruunt*, 'they rush madly into the furnace', 3.244).<sup>68</sup> Again, no literal monsters, but dangerous natural forces which can easily get out of hand and turn the most docile of animals into monsters. Finally, the phrase *genus acre virum* ('a fierce breed of men') is picked up by *genus acre luporum* ('the fierce breed of wolves'), again in the attack on *amor* in 3.264.<sup>69</sup> It may also be significant that the same phrase is used by Lucretius of lions:<sup>70</sup> there are no lions in Italy, but a multitude of lion-like men, who, like the wolves of 3.264, have the potential to wreak havoc if not kept in check. Thus, even while celebrating the glories of Italy, Virgil reminds us of the darker side of his picture: the magnificent animals and sturdy farmer-soldiers of the *laudes Italiae* are also (and inevitably) the instruments of the rampaging Mars of book 1 and the maddening Venus of book 3. It is not necessary to regard the passage as a 'lie', however; Virgil, like Lucretius, simply shows us both the positive and the negative side of nature, both her creative and destructive aspects. In Virgil's poem, though, the contrast is more problematic, in part because (as we shall see) the violent side of human and animal nature is inseparable from the qualities which are essential to the farmer in his 'war' against nature.

The passages in which Virgil talks explicitly about war are complex and ambiguous, both in themselves, in their relation to each other, and in their relation to Lucretius and other texts. Reading the poem sequentially, we move from a Lucretian opposition between warfare and agriculture in the finale to book 1 (where, however, the reference to Octavian looks forward to later, more optimistic passages); to a celebration of an Italy where warfare and agriculture are apparently in

<sup>68</sup> On the fiery character of the horse and its links with *amor* (and the plague), see Ross (1987), pp. 150–4; and pp. 261–3 below.

<sup>69</sup> As Thomas points out *ad loc.*, these are the only two occurrences of the phrase in the Virgilian corpus.

<sup>70</sup> DRN 5.862: *principio genus acre leonum saevaeque saecula* ('first of all the the fierce breed and savage race of lions'). The shape of the line is similar to Virgil's *haec genus acre virum, Marsos pubemque Sabellam* ('she [has raised] a fierce breed of men, Marsians and Sabine youths'). The Lucretian line is a variant on the earlier *denique cur acris violentia triste leonum | seminium* ('lastly, why is savage fierceness [characteristic of] the cruel breed of lions?', 3.741f.; the second half of v. 742 is almost identical to 5.863), which is recalled by Virgil's *saeva leonum | semina* ('the savage breed of lions') in 1.51f.

harmony, and the products of culture are as highly valued as the products of nature (but there are underlying threats of violence); to a further opposition between the violence of city life and the almost Epicurean *quies* of the countryman (which nevertheless involves such un-Lucretian elements as *labor* and the gods, and culminates in the thought that such sturdy yeomen laid the foundations of Roman *imperium*); to a celebration of Octavian's victories, which *parallel* the metaphorical victories of the poet; to a final *contrast*, in the *sphragis*, between Octavian's wars and the poet's *otium*. The relationship between poetry, warfare and agriculture is further complicated by Virgil's use of military imagery, to which we now turn.

### The farmer as general

Virgil's farmer is repeatedly compared – both explicitly and implicitly – to the commander of an army. He trains and disciplines his crops and livestock; draws up his 'troops' in battle formation; attacks and subdues the recalcitrant soil; and equips himself with *arma* ('weapons' or 'implements') for the struggle against the forces of disorder and decay.

Imagery of this kind is particularly prominent in the central part of book 1, leading up to and following the 'aetiology of *labor*' in 121–59.<sup>71</sup> It is first introduced in v. 99, between two reminiscences of Hesiod:<sup>72</sup>

neque illum  
flava Ceres alto nequiquam spectat Olympo;  
et qui, proscisso quae suscitāt aequore terga,  
rursus in obliquum verso perrumpit aratro  
*exercetque* frequens tellurem atque *imperat* arvis.  
Umida solstitia atque hiemes orate serenas,  
agricolae; hiberno laetissima pulvere farra,  
laetus ager.

1.95–102

Golden Ceres will look on him with favour from high Olympus, and on the man who turns his plough and breaks a second time at right angles through the ridges he has thrown up from the furrowed earth, who works the soil hard and gives orders to his fields. Pray,

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Wilkinson (1969), pp. 78f.

<sup>72</sup> Lines 95–6 combine allusion to Hes. *Op.* 300f. with Call. *Hymn* 3.12 (see Thomas *ad loc.*); line 100 more distantly recalls *Op.* 465 (εὐχέσθαι δὲ Διὶ χθονίῳ Δημήτερι θ' ἄγνῃ, 'pray to chthonian Zeus and holy Demeter'). For further Hesiodic echoes in this section, see p. 61, n. 9 above.

farmers, for wet summers and fair winters; spelt grows best in the winter dust, and the fields are most fertile.

The military vocabulary<sup>73</sup> subtly modifies the Hesiodic ethos of the lines: the successful farmer is not so much a toiling peasant as a heroic figure, disciplining and controlling his land, and training it to cooperate with him in producing an abundant harvest.<sup>74</sup> But a mere five lines later, we are presented with a significantly different version of the the metaphor:

quid dicam, iacto qui semine comminus arva  
insequitur. 104f.

No need to mention the man who, having cast his seed, tackles the fields at close quarters.

Here, the land is represented not as the farmer's army, but as his antagonist: the language suggests a legionary who, having thrown his pilum, engages in hand-to-hand combat<sup>75</sup> – and the enemy is now the very fields (*arva*) that a few moments ago seemed to be on the farmer's side. The military vocabulary here also serves to introduce a Homeric allusion: as has often been noted, the picture of the farmer irrigating his fields in 106–10 is based on *Il.* 21.257–62, a simile describing Achilles' fight with

<sup>73</sup> *exerceo* is used of working land by Horace (*Epod.* 2.3), Columella (2.2.7, 4.3.4, 4.14.2) and others, but appears not to have this sense before Virgil (cf. Kiessling and Heinze (1966) on the Horace passage; and note that other early examples either occur in contexts where soldiers are involved – e.g. *Aen.* 7.748, *Tac. Ann.* 13.54.2 – or which allude to the *Georgics* – e.g. Manil. 1.86). Elsewhere in the agricultural writers, the verb may be used literally, of exercising animals or carrying out tasks of various kinds, or metaphorically (e.g. *Col.* 6.23.3, of the military discipline of the farm). For *exerceo* in the military sense, see e.g. *Caes. B.G.* 5.55.3, 6.23.6; *Virg. Aen.* 4.87; *Ov. Am.* 1.8.41. *impero* is occasionally used in agricultural contexts by later writers (meaning something like 'put demands on', 'expect (too much) of'; see *Col.* 3.3.6, 4.24.21, 4.29.12; *Plin. N.H.* 17.178; *Sen. Dial.* 9.17.5; *Tac. Germ.* 26.2; and cf. the similar metaphor used by Cicero, *Sen.* 51, and Ovid, *Fast.* 2.296). The combination of the two verbs is calculated, however, to bring out the military sense, which is much more strongly felt here than in any of the other examples, except for Columella's military simile in 6.23.3, and the discussion of bees in both Varro and Columella. Cf. *DRN* 2.97 and 5.1424, where Lucretius puns (implicitly) on *exercere/exercitus* ('exercise'/'army'). For *frequens* as a military technical term ('regular in service'), see Conington and Nettleship (1898) *ad loc.*

<sup>74</sup> Farrell (1991), p. 212 and n.16 points out that the farmer's 'training' turns the raw *tellus* ('land') into productive *arva* ('fields'). Cf. 2.207–11, discussed below.

<sup>75</sup> *iacio* is the usual word for sowing seed (e.g. *Liv.* 40.16.3, *Col.* 2.9.2, *Pliny, N.H.* 18.334), and both *comminus* and *insequor* are regularly used in non-military contexts (e.g. *Lucr.* 4.407, 6.904; *Aen.* 3.32). Elsewhere in Virgil, however, the verb usually has the sense 'harry, attack'; and, again, the *build-up* of words with possible military connotations is striking (cf. Mynors *ad loc.*).

the river Scamander.<sup>76</sup> Thus, the farmer is compared not only to a Homeric warrior, but to the Homeric warrior *par excellence*, at the height of his murderous fury following the death of Patroclus. The comparison has two effects: one is to 'heroize' the farmer, rather as Lucretius heroizes Epicurus, to elevate the status of his activity (and Virgil's poetry) to the level of Homeric epic.<sup>77</sup> The other is to portray agriculture as a fierce struggle against the violent forces of nature; this is a motif which, as we shall see, recurs throughout book 1 and the poem.

The discussion of irrigation and drainage is immediately followed by the 'aetiology of *labor*', which introduces another variant on the military motif. In the brief description of the Golden Age, we are told that *ante Iovem nulli subigebant arva coloni* ('before Jupiter no farmer subdued the fields', 1.125).<sup>78</sup> The idea that the land needs to be 'subdued' continues the metaphor of 104f., and also takes up the language used by Lucretius in one of his more 'pessimistic' moments: the phrase *terraique solum subigentes cimus ad ortus* ('we encourage [crops] to grow by subduing the soil of the earth') occurs as part of Lucretius' anti-creationist argument in book 5 (211), which, as we have seen, is a text of central importance for Virgil.<sup>79</sup> Lucretius argues that the world cannot be the work of the gods because it is too imperfect, particularly from the point of view of human beings, who are only able to carve out a modest living for themselves with the greatest of effort. For Lucretius, then, the image is one of a struggle for survival rather than a heroic battle against nature; but there is also some suggestion in Virgil's text that nature is the *victim* of man's agricultural labours. There is a strong contrast with the idealizing tone of the next three lines, where we are not only told that in the Golden Age nature brought forth everything *of her own free will* (*nullo poscente*), but also that it was wrong (*ne . . . quidem . . . fas*) to divide up or parcel out the land. Jupiter's reign brought an end to this harmony between man and nature, and introduced a regime where nature was gradually subjected to man's

<sup>76</sup> Virgil follows Lucretian practice here in transposing a Homeric simile to the level of his georgic 'narrative'. Cf. Ross (1987), p. 51; Thomas *ad loc.*

<sup>77</sup> For a wholly positive reading of Virgil's imagery along these lines, cf. Haberman (1977); Glei (1991), pp. 277–86.

<sup>78</sup> Again, the verb *subigo* is fairly common in agricultural contexts, in the sense 'work (soil)'; see e.g. Cato 45.1, 161.1; Varro 1.41.3; Cic. *Sen.* 59; Tib. 2.3.8; Col. 2.2.21. But the build-up of military vocabulary in the preceding paragraph, and also the emphasis on strenuous effort brought out by the context and the echo of Lucretius, ensure that the full metaphorical force of the word is felt here.

<sup>79</sup> Admittedly, the line also occurs in a more neutral context in 1.212.

will. As we saw in our previous discussion of this passage, the tone of lines 135–46 is difficult (if not impossible) to pin down; but there is at least a shade of sympathy for the ‘victims’ of man’s endeavour.<sup>80</sup> Rivers are personified in 136, and feel (*sensere*) the effects of human progress; in 141 they are ‘beaten’ (*verberat*) by the fisherman’s nets; and birds are ‘tricked’ or ‘deceived’ (*fallere*) by the use of bird-lime.

This double use of the military metaphor (the war against nature or with nature as ally; the farmer as hero or the farmer as cruel oppressor) continues through the ‘works’ section of book 1. In 155, he must ‘harry’ (*insectabere*) weeds; in 220, the soil needs training (*exercebis*), but the crops seem to be the enemy (*instabis aristas*, ‘you must set upon the grain’); and in 268–72 a series of words with possible military applications (*exercere*, ‘work at/train’; *deducere*, ‘lead away’; *praetendere*, ‘defend’; *insidias*, ‘ambush’; *incendere*, ‘burn’) suggest that the farm as a whole is an army on campaign.<sup>81</sup> Most strikingly, farm-tools are described as *arma* (literally, ‘weapons’, 160);<sup>82</sup> there is a strong contrast with the finale to book 1, where the plough and the scythe are opposed to the instruments of war (493–7 and 508). Again, then, agriculture is both like and unlike warfare; while the creativity and order associated with agriculture contrast with the destructiveness and chaos of battle, there are also disturbing similarities.

In book 2, the ‘training’ metaphor becomes more common: the world has been tamed or pacified by farmers (*domitum*, 114); the *quincunx*

<sup>80</sup> Cf. pp. 61–7 above, and Perkell (1989), pp. 33f.

<sup>81</sup> *insector* (as opposed to the commoner *insequor*) almost always suggests hostile intent: see OLD s.v.; for *exerceo*, see n. 73 above; *insto*, like *insequor*, is common in various different senses, but usually means ‘harry’ or ‘attack’ elsewhere in Virgil; *deduco* is used of leading troops, e.g. Caes. B.G. 2.33.2, Suet. Nero 18, Liv. 27.15.17, 34.58.6 (though it is also the correct term for ‘drawing off’ water: cf. Varro R.R. 1.36.1, Cic. Div. 2.69, Vitruv. 2.1.3); for *praetendo* used of defensive formations or fortifications, cf. Aen. 9.599, Liv. 22.20.1, 44.9.9, Tac. Hist. 2.6.2, 2.14.2; for *incendere* ‘esp. buildings, etc., intended for destruction’ (OLD s.v. §1b), see e.g. Cic. Verr. 3.186, Caes. B.G. 1.5.2, 6.6.1, Tac. Ag. 5.3.

<sup>82</sup> The usual Latin word is *instrumenta*; as Mynors points out, there is a kind of bilingual pun here, based on the double sense of the Greek word ὄπλα (‘implements’ or ‘weapons’). Note too the military connotations of the word *gloria* (‘glory’, 168; cf. Augello (1974)). Thomas suggests *ad loc.* that we might even go so far as to see this as a kind of agricultural equivalent of the Homeric arming scene. Cf. also the Libyan herdsman in 3.339–48, who is compared to a Roman legionary (with a pun on *arma*, ‘weapons’, and *amentarius*, ‘herdsman’; cf. Ross (1987), pp. 173f.). Haberman (1977) suggests that the image may derive ultimately from Varro’s casual reference to armed shepherds in R.R. 2.10.1; cf. also Col. 1.praef.14, where a parallel is drawn between the cultivation and defence of one’s land. In Lucretius, *arma* are particularly important as a symbol of the non-Epicurean life: see esp. 2.49, 2.621 and 629f., 5.50 and the long discussion of military innovations in 5.1281–1349.

arrangement of vines is like an army drawn up for battle (279–83); the vineyard must be ‘trained’, and vines ‘disciplined’ by pruning (354–70: note especially *exercere*, ‘train’, 356 and *exerce imperia*, ‘exercise your authority’, 370; and the military-sounding *calami*, ‘canes’, *hastilia*, ‘shafts’, *sudes*, ‘stakes’ and *furcae*, ‘forked poles’, in 358f.);<sup>83</sup> and vines are arranged in ‘ranks’ (*antes*, 417).<sup>84</sup> But we also find a great deal of vocabulary which seems designed to arouse our sympathy with the vines, as the victims of the farmer’s violent domination. The vines and other trees are personified throughout, and the personification is characteristically combined with violent language. So at 23–5, suckers are to be ‘torn away’ from the ‘tender body’ of the parent plant, and stocks to be buried alive;<sup>85</sup> and the curiously violent verb *urgere* (‘press upon’) is used of the apparently protective action of shading plants’ roots in 352.<sup>86</sup> The two aspects are combined in the vignette of the tree cut down to clear plough-land in 207–11. The vocabulary here suggests the sack of a city: we might compare Livy’s account of the destruction of Alba Longa (1.29), which similarly emphasizes the antiquity of the city and the misery of the inhabitants forced to leave their ancestral dwellings (cf. *antiquas domos avium*, ‘the ancient homes of birds’; *nidis relictis*, ‘their nests abandoned’), and the utter destruction of the city (cf. *cum stirpibus imis eruit*, ‘he has pulled down, roots and all’). But Livy and Virgil both end on a more positive note: Livy’s next chapter begins *Roma interim crescit Albae ruinis* (‘meanwhile Rome expanded with the destruction of Alba’, 30.1), and Virgil concludes *at rudis enituit impulso vomere campus* (‘but the rough plain grows bright under the thrust of the

<sup>83</sup> *calamus* is rarely used of vine-props (Col. 4.4.1, 4.32.2, 5.4.1, Plin. *N.H.* 17.168), more frequently of arrows (e.g. *Aen.* 10.140, *Ov. Met.* 8.30, *Sil.* 2.106, *Juv.* 13.80); *hastile* usually means a spear(-shaft), e.g. *Enn. Ann.* 392 Sk., *Cic. Rab. Perd.* 21, *Liv.* 21.8.10, 32.17.14, *Virg. Aen.* 9.402, 11.650, *Ov. Met.* 7.676, occasionally a cane (*Aen.* 3.23, Col. 4.12.1, Plin. *N.H.* 17.212); *sudis* is used in an agricultural context by Pliny (*N.H.* 14.13, 17.101), but is more often military (e.g. *Caes. B.G.* 5.18.3, *B.C.* 1.27.3, *Liv.* 23.37.3, *Virg. Aen.* 7.524, Col. 8.2.10); *furca* has no specifically military application, but is used in a military context by Caesar (*B.C.* 2.11.2) and Livy (28.3.7).

<sup>84</sup> The word is very rare, but seems originally to have meant a file of cavalry: see Thomas *ad loc.*

<sup>85</sup> For *obruo* in this sense, cf. *Cic. Phil.* 4.12, *Liv.* 22.51.8, *Sal. Jug.* 79.8. It is also used of ‘overwhelming’ the enemy in battle (e.g. *Aen.* 2.411, *Liv.* 1.11.7, 21.55.6, *Tac. Hist.* 3.29). Though the word is also fairly common in agricultural contexts, the personification seems once again to bring out the military metaphor.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. *DRN* 3.893: *urgerive superne obtritum pondere terrae* (‘or to be crushed and pressed down by the weight of earth from above’). Lucretius’ language here is emphatically violent, since he is arguing that being buried is no better (or worse) than having one’s corpse devoured by wild animals.



plough').<sup>87</sup> This sums up a part of the Virgilian farmer's dilemma: his 'training' of the earth may result in order and productivity, but it also involves a violent and destructive war against nature.

There are two slightly different metaphors at work, then, in Virgil's use of military imagery: the farmer is either a general ordering and disciplining his 'army'; or he is a warrior fighting (heroically or cruelly – or both) against the destructive or chaotic forces of nature. The first of the two variants resembles the (largely positive) value set on the resemblance between farmer and soldier in the agricultural writers, where the army is associated with toughness and order. It can also be related to the positive assessment of agriculture in *DRN* 5, where man gradually 'tames' the land (*mansuescere*, 5.1368 – a significantly gentler word than Virgil's *subigebant*, 'subdued', or *domitum*, 'tamed' (2.114), however), and produces an ordered and beautiful agricultural landscape. Here, however, agriculture is *contrasted* with warfare. There is also a further link between the farmer (as general) and Lucretius' *natura*. Like Lucretian Nature, Virgil's farmer organizes the chaotic elements of his world, and ensures that the forces of creation balance the forces of destruction.<sup>88</sup> On the other hand, the farmer is also pitted *against* nature, like the Lucretian farmer of 5.206–17. The change in perspective is only slight, but it suggests a more pessimistic view of the farmer's lot, as a struggle against the inevitable forces of decay and destruction. This complex of imagery recalls Lucretius' application of military imagery to the *destructive* forces of nature and the chaotic 'war' of the atoms and elements. For Virgil, then, as for Lucretius, the natural world is both creative and destructive, ordered and chaotic. But by transferring the military imagery from the external world to the farmer, Virgil suggests that even the farmer in his idealized rustic *quies* cannot detach himself from these struggles and ambiguities, as Lucretius wants his disciple to do. This is particularly clear in Virgil's adaptation of Lucretius' 'distant view' simile (quoted above, p. 235). The *quincunx* is compared to an army drawn up for battle:

<sup>87</sup> Thomas compares Virgil's account of the fall of Troy in *Aen.* 2 (both Livy and Virgil may in fact be using Ennius' account of the fall of Alba; cf. Ogilvie (1965) *ad* Livy 1.29), which is similarly seen as a sacrifice necessary for bringing about the birth of Rome. On these and other literary accounts of the sack of cities, see also Paul (1982).

<sup>88</sup> For Nature as general, see n. 17 above (note especially the organization of the random movements of the atoms *per foedera naturae*, 'according to the pacts of nature', 2.300–2; cf. 1.586, 3.416, 5.310, 6.906f.). The role of Virgil's farmer is particularly close in 2.9 and 3.63–71 (on which see pp. 95–6 and 177 above).

ut saepe ingenti bello cum longa cohortis  
 explicuit legio et campo stetit agmen aperto,  
 derectaeque acies ac late fluctuat omnis  
 aere renidenti tellus,<sup>89</sup> necdum horrida miscent  
 proelia, sed dubius mediis Mars errat in armis.  
 omnia sint paribus numeris dimensa viarum,  
 non animum modo uti<sup>90</sup> pascat prospectus inanem,  
 sed quia non aliter viris dabit omnibus aequas  
 terra, neque in vacuum poterunt se extendere rami.

2.279–87

Just as often in mighty war, when a long legion has deployed its cohorts, and the marching-column has come to a halt in the open plain; the battle-lines are drawn up and all the earth round about ripples with the gleam of bronze; they have not yet joined in dreadful battle, but Mars wanders undecided in the midst of the armed men. So the vineyard should be laid out with all its paths equidistant, not merely so that the view may give pleasure to an idle mind, but because otherwise the earth will not give equal nourishment to all the vines, nor will there be sufficient space for the branches to spread out.

This passage problematizes the Lucretian opposition between agriculture and war, and between the non-Epicurean fighter and the detached Epicurean observer, in a number of ways. Firstly, unlike Lucretius' army, Virgil's is not on the move, but is drawn up in orderly array ready for battle. Lucretius' symbol of chaotic movement thus becomes for Virgil a symbol of order. At the very end of the simile, however, Virgil reminds us of the battle that is to come: *dubius Mars* ('Mars, undecided') not only suggests the uncertainty of the outcome, but also recalls Mars's rampage in the finale to book 1. The opposition between warfare and agriculture collapses: agriculture is actually like war, in both its disciplined order and its chaotic violence.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, Virgil seems to rule out Lucretian detachment: this 'legion' is not just a pleasant prospect for

<sup>89</sup> Cf. *DRN* 2.326, *aere renidescit tellus* ('the earth is bright with bronze'), which alludes in turn to *Il.* 19.362. The language in 285f. is also Lucretian (cf. *pascit* . . . *visus*, 'he feasts his eyes', 1.36; and the formulaic *sed quia*, 'but because', 1.498, 657 etc.).

<sup>90</sup> The form *uti* (= *ut*) is a Lucretian usage (occurring 81 times in the *DRN*, and only 7 times in the entire Virgilian corpus, including the present passage).

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Bradley (1969).

the observer,<sup>92</sup> because the farmer is, and must be, actively involved in the 'war'.

In this instance, Virgil has transformed Lucretius' symbol of detachment from the disorder of public life to one of involvement, of *labor* which creates order and productivity. But the fleeting reference to the battle to come is a reminder of the violent forces with which the farmer will have to cope, and which he will himself employ.

### Nature at war: the cosmic battlefield

For Lucretius, the 'war' of the atoms and the elements are objective facts; but, paradoxically, by accepting the violence in nature, the Epicurean recruit can 'conquer' fear and desire and win his freedom from the strife which dominates human interaction. Virgil's use of similar imagery problematizes Lucretius' claims, by working out the full implications of this paradox: if strife is real on the elemental level, is it not also inevitable on the human level? As we shall see, the metaphor of the farmer's war with nature is juxtaposed with metaphors of violence within nature and literal violence on the human level, with the implication that these different levels are (or may be) coordinate. This is in itself a very Lucretian technique: as we are told in *DRN* 2.123f., *rerum magnarum parva potest res | exemplare dare et vestigia notitiae* ('small things can show us the pattern of great ones and put us on the track of understanding').<sup>93</sup> The microcosm resembles the macrocosm; so, for Virgil, there is war on the smallest level (the bees in book 4) and the greatest (the storm in 1.316–34), in the natural world (the battle of the

<sup>92</sup> In addition to *DRN* 2.331f., contrast 2.5f. (the pleasure of observing human folly from the safety of the citadel of philosophy) and 5.1376–8 (the pleasant prospect of fields and vineyards is implicitly contrasted with the chaos of war at the end of the preceding section; note also *Martis catervas*, 'the troops of Mars', in 1304). The 'beauty plus utility' *topos* is traditional (cf. Cic. *Sen.* 59, based on Xen. *Oec.* 4.21; Varro, *R.R.* 1.4.1f.; Plin. *N.H.* 17.78; Col. 3.21.4; Quint. 8.3.9; Pallad. 3.9.11); and the army is also used as a model for (agricultural) efficiency by Columella (cf. p. 243 above). But the pointed echo of Lucretius and the contrast with the end of book 1 invest the image with a peculiar complexity here.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. *Geo.* 4.176: *si parva licet componere magnis* ('if one may compare small things with great'). There is of course humour here (the tiny bees have just been compared incongruously to monstrous Cyclopes), but Virgil is also drawing attention to the allegorical character of much of his account of the bees' community, which is so clearly presented as analogous to human societies. On Lucretius' use of analogies between microcosm and macrocosm, see esp. Hardie (1986), pp. 219–23 and Schiesaro (1990).

bulls in 3.219–41) and the human world (the finales to books 1 and 2, and the *sphragis*).

The war of nature is most strikingly portrayed in two parallel passages which occupy corresponding positions in books 1 and 2. In 1.316–34, a thunderstorm devastates the grain harvest; in 2.303–11, a storm-like fire devastates an olive grove.<sup>94</sup> It is important to remember that both ‘storms’ are only potential threats, and that the farmer who follows the poet’s advice will be forewarned against the dangers and should be able to mitigate their ill effects; one should not exaggerate the pessimism of the two passages.<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, both passages illustrate the extreme violence present in nature, and the imagery of fire, storms and warfare shared by the two passages has further resonances, especially in book 3.

The storm in book 1 was discussed in some detail in an earlier chapter,<sup>96</sup> where I noted that the whole passage, particularly the battle imagery (note especially *ventorum concurrere proelia*, ‘the winds clash in battle’, 318 and *agmen aquarum*, ‘a flood/army of water’, 322) is highly reminiscent of both Lucretian storms and Homeric battle-similes. The verb *concurrere* (‘clash’) is then picked up in the literal battle of 489, suggesting a parallel between the war of nature and human wars (both of which are also predicted by ‘signs’). The fire in book 2 is also Lucretian in its vocabulary: the ‘huge noise’ it makes is like a Lucretian thunderclap; the ‘pitch-dark cloud’ which it sends up to the heavens is a feature of both thunderstorms and volcanic eruptions in *DRN* 6; and the fire is finally aggravated by a storm which ‘falls on’ the trees like Lucretius’ Athenian plague.<sup>97</sup> Most strikingly of all, the fire is said to be

<sup>94</sup> Both passages also begin with the adverb *saepe*, ‘often’.

<sup>95</sup> Note *hoc metuens caeli mensis et sidera serva*, ‘in fear of this, watch the stars of heaven, month by month’, 1.335 and *incautus*, ‘careless’, 2.303. Thomas (*ad* 2.303) points out that Orpheus – significantly – is also *incautus* (4.488), unlike the careful Aristaeus, who obeys Cyrene’s instructions (literally) to the letter (4.538–40 + 544–6 ≈ 550–3).

<sup>96</sup> See pp. 68–70 above.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. *ingentem . . . sonitum dedit* (‘it makes a huge noise’, 306) with *uritur [nubes] ingenti sonitu succensa repente* (‘[the cloud] suddenly catches fire and burns with a huge noise’, *DRN* 6.151), *excitat [turbo] ingenti sonitu mare* (‘[the whirlwind] stirs up the sea with a huge noise’, 6.442) and *da(n)t sonitum* (‘make(s) a noise’, 6.108, 131, 136, 157, 170); *picea crassius caligine nubem* (‘a thick cloud of pitch-dark smoke’, 309) with *nimbus*, | *ut picis e caelo demissum flumen* (‘rain like a stream of pitch falling from the sky’, *DRN* 6.256f., again recalling a Homeric simile, *Il.* 4.275–9: the troops of the Aiantes march into battle like a storm-cloud), *nubis caligine crassa* (‘thick, dark cloud’, 6.461) and *crassa volvitur caligine fumum* (‘it rolls out thick, dark smoke’, 6.691); *incubuit* (‘has fallen upon’, 311) with *[mortifer aestus] incubuit . . . populo Pandionis omni* (‘[a deadly current of air] fell upon . . . all the people of Pandion’, *DRN* 6.1143). The phrases *praesertim si tempestas* (‘especially if a gale . . .’, 310) and *hoc ubi* (‘when this [happens]’, 312) are also Lucretian: cf. 2.32 and 6.274 (etc.).

victorious and 'rule' amongst the trees, an image taken from the temporary 'victories' of fire and water in Lucretius' war of the elements, 5.394f.<sup>98</sup>

Both in book 1 and in book 2, then, 'warlike' Lucretian storms and the 'storm' of war defeat the (incautious) farmer's efforts to order nature and win the *quies* ascribed to him in the finale to book 2. The forces of nature can easily get out of hand and ensure that human effort comes to nothing. This is also true of the farmer's own crops and livestock, which require violent treatment and strict (military) discipline to keep them under control. So the vines, as we saw, need to be treated severely to restrain their natural 'high spirits' (*ramos compesce fluentis*, 'curb the rampant growth of the branches', 370). Though the vines are generally represented as delicate creatures (especially in the praise of spring), they are also associated with the lurking threat of violence and loss of restraint, particularly in the *quincunx* simile discussed above, and the *vituperatio vitis* (454–7), where wine is blamed as the cause of the Centauromachy.<sup>99</sup> By contrast, the olive, the 'plant of peace' needs no cultivation: it is the victim, not the cause, of violent forces, and so need not be 'disciplined' like the vine.<sup>100</sup>

There is a similar contrast in book 3 between the gentle sheep and goats (which need the farmer's protection) and the horse, which, like the vine, always threatens to break away from human restraint. The horse has military associations throughout the book, and also picks up once again the imagery of storms and fire associated with the destructive forces of nature in the first two books. There are Lucretian precedents here too: though Lucretius ridicules Diomedes' fiery horses,<sup>101</sup> his horse is a warlike creature (*equorum duellica proles*, 'the warlike breed of horses', 2.662), spurred on *ad arma* ('for the combat') by sexual desire (5.1076), and is trained for war before other animals (5.1297ff.).<sup>102</sup> Virgil takes up

<sup>98</sup> *semel . . . fuerit superantior ignis | et semel . . . umor regnarit in arvis* ('fire once prevailed, and . . . water once reigned over the land'). Elsewhere in Virgil, the verb *regnare* ('reign') is used only in its literal sense (with the possible exception of 4.90, of the king-bee). Cf. also Lucretius' similar use of the verb *dominari* ('rule') in 6.89, 224 and 642.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. also the military uses of uncultivated trees in 447f.

<sup>100</sup> The phrase *placitam Paci* ('beloved of Peace') recalls Lucretian *ataraxia* (*placida pax*, 'tranquil peace', in 1.40 and 6.73). Peace achieved without effort proves a fleeting hope, however: even the happy farmers in the finale have to work.

<sup>101</sup> 5.30. Cf. 901–6 for a contemptuous dismissal of myths of fire-breathing monsters.

<sup>102</sup> Virgil's emphasis on the horse's eagerness for victory in the chariot-race also owes something to Lucretius (cf. 2.263–5); and the aged horse of *Geo.* 3.95–100 recalls *DRN* 5.886f.

these hints and develops them. He tells us that a good horse will be excited by the sound of arms (3.83),<sup>103</sup> and will resemble the legendary horses of Mars and Achilles (90f.). As in Lucretius, the invention of riding is seen primarily as a military development (*sub armis*, 'armed', 116), and the horse (unlike the oxen of 157–78) is trained for war or racing, rather than more peaceful purposes (179–86).<sup>104</sup> This last passage is particularly important, because it culminates in a simile which can be linked with the storm images of books 1 and 2. The fully-trained horse will resemble the north wind, sweeping over land and sea. The lines are based on another Iliadic simile, *Il.* 2.144–8,<sup>105</sup> and Virgil's vocabulary also recalls – once again – a series of Lucretian passages which describe the destructive effects of natural forces.<sup>106</sup> Like the storm of book 1 and the fire of book 2, then, the horse's energy is potentially destructive, and this becomes clear when it breaks away from human restraint under the effects of *amor* (250–4 and 266–83) and tears at its own limbs when given wine as a remedy for the plague (509–14).<sup>107</sup> But it is precisely this energy which the farmer needs to exploit: 'fiery' nostrils are one of the signs of a good horse, and, most

(cf. esp. *deficit* and *deficiunt*, 'grow(s) weak'; *senectae* and *senecta*, 'old age' (in the same *sedes*; and the word is rarely used of animals)). Here, though, there is an important difference: Lucretius is stressing the (physiological) *differences* between human beings and horses (to prove that Centaurs can never have existed); while Virgil has just lamented their *common* subjection to old age and death (66–8: note *senectus* in the same *sedes* again; also *fugit*, 'fly by', corresponding to Lucretius' *fugienti* . . . *vita*, 'as its life flies by' (though the metaphor is of course a very common one); and the Lucretian *miseris mortalibus* ('wretched mortals', *DRN* 5.944; cf. 3.60 and 6.1.)). Cf. Gale (1991).

<sup>103</sup> Jahn (1905) compares Apollonius' description of a war-horse, *Arg.* 3.1259–61 (*si qua sonum procul arma dedere, | stare loco nescit* 'if there is a far-off noise of arms, it cannot keep still', 83f.) ~ ἐελδόμενος πολέμοιο | σκορθμῶ ἐπιχρεμέθων ('it neighs and prances in its eagerness for battle'); *cavatque | tellurem* ('and it kicks at the ground', 87f.) ~ κρούει πῆδον ('it stamps on the ground'); *micat auribus* ('it pricks up its ears', 84) ~ ὀρθοῖσιν οὖρασιν ('with ears pricked').

<sup>104</sup> Virgil's discussion here is loosely based on Varro, *R.R.* 2.7.11–16; but Varro only mentions specifically military training in passing (cf. *Col.* 6.27.12f. and 29.4). For parallels between horse-/chariot-racing and war, cf. Glei (1991), pp. 291f. Note also the military technical term *dilectus* ('selection') in 3.72 (used in this sense by Varro, *R.R.* 2.5.17, and Columella, 6.22.1 – but much more common in the military sense; cf. *OLD* s.v. §§1 and 2).

<sup>105</sup> Cf. also *Il.* 20.226–9 (the horses of Erichthonius).

<sup>106</sup> *incubuit* ('falls upon', 197) ~ *DRN* 6.1143 (the plague); *differt nubila* ('it scatters the clouds', 197f.) ~ *DRN* 1.272 (a strong wind); *campique natantes* ('the watery plains [i.e. the sea]', 198) ~ *DRN* 5.488, 6.405 and 6.1142 (the third refers again to the plague); *flabra* ('gusts', 199) is a Lucretian word, rare in classical Latin (see Thomas *ad* 2.293); and *aequora verrens* ('sweeping over the sea', 201) ~ *DRN* 5.266, 5.388 and 6.624 (all referring to the drying heat of the sun).

<sup>107</sup> In both cases, the horse's fiery nature is its own downfall or the downfall of its keepers: note *flamma*, 'flame', 271 and *ardebant*, 'they burned', 512.

notably, a horse that is too old will be unequal to the 'battles' of sexual intercourse, like a fire without strength.<sup>108</sup>

frigidus in Venerem senior, frustra que laborem  
 ingratum trahit, et, si quando ad proelia ventum est,  
 ut quondam in stipulis magnus sine viribus ignis,  
 incassum furit.

3.97–100

An older animal is frigid, and endures the unwelcome labour in vain; even if it actually comes to grips, its passion is fruitless, like a great fire in a stubble field, burning without strength.

The fire of *amor*, which wreaks such havoc among the animals (and leads to more literal battles, 209–83), is necessary for the farmer, but can easily get out of control. Not only is the farmer's battle against nature sometimes lost; but it also involves the exploitation of the very forces which are sometimes the cause of his downfall. The farmer's virtues and the soldier's virtues are one and the same; once again, the opposition between the chaos of war and the order imposed by agriculture collapses.

Throughout the first part of book 3, the more placid cattle generally provide a counterpoint to the high spirits and military associations of the horse. But in the central digression on the effects of *amor*, they too yield to the violent force of sexual attraction, as rival bulls engage in single combat over a heifer.<sup>109</sup> Even the mildest of animals can be transformed into 'warriors' by the terrible power of *amor*. Once again, parallels with the threatening natural forces of books 1 and 2, and with the latent aggressiveness of the horse, are brought out by the use of storm imagery: the defeated bull is compared, as it returns to resume the fray, to a wave gradually building up before breaking on the shore. The simile is based on a Homeric model, *Il.* 4.422–6, which describes the advance of the Greeks against the Trojans. The echo has several effects: it reinforces the anthropomorphism of the entire passage (which leads up to the explicit statement in 242–4 that *amor* affects man and beast alike), in particular the

<sup>108</sup> As Thomas points out *ad loc.*, the elegiac language both serves to humanize the horse and to lead up to the language used of *amor* and the plague; but it also picks up a metaphor from Lucretius, who (as noted) refers euphemistically to intercourse as *arma* ('combat') in 5.1076.

<sup>109</sup> It is worth noting that Virgil departs markedly from his agricultural sources here. There is a very brief reference to fights between bulls in Aristotle (*H.A.* 575a), who notes that the defeated animal will often fight back when its rival is weakened by sexual exhaustion (διδὼ τὴν λαγνείαν); but fights are not mentioned at all by Varro, although he does advise segregating the sexes outside the mating season (2.1.18, 2.5.12).

portrayal of the bulls as epic warriors;<sup>110</sup> it suggests parallels between the behaviour of bull and horse, which was also dignified with an epic simile a few lines earlier; and, as already suggested, it points to the function of the passage as a further variation on the theme of the violence always latent in the natural and human worlds, which the farmer ignores at his peril.

After the digression on *amor*, Virgil moves on to discuss sheep and goats. There is an obvious contrast here between the violent behaviour just described and the pastoral peace of the second half of the book, particularly the evocative account of the shepherd's day in 322–38.<sup>111</sup> Curiously, however, Virgil introduces this section of the book with a military image:

nec sum animi dubius verbis ea *vincere* magnum  
quam sit et angustis hunc addere rebus honorem.      289f.

Nor is there any doubt in my mind how great a challenge it will be to master these matters with words, and to give such glory to these little things.

This is the only time Virgil uses the Lucretian formula *vincere verbis* ('to master with words'),<sup>112</sup> and its employment here seems far from casual. As we saw in chapter 5, the language of the 'second proem' is highly Lucretian throughout, recalling passages where Lucretius comments on the difficulty of his poetic task, and on the *suavis amor Musarum* ('sweet love of the Muses') which will enable him to overcome these difficulties and 'conquer' the reader.<sup>113</sup> But Virgil's phrasing seems calculated to draw out the potential conflicts in Lucretius' application of Dionysiac and military language to his own poetic endeavour. Parallels between the poet's *amor Musarum* ('love of the Muses') and the frenzy of sexual desire which afflicts the animals in the immediately preceding lines tend to link poetry with violence and passion, rather than with order and peace; similarly, the 'conquest' metaphor in 289 implies that poetic composition, like agriculture, is a kind of war. The violent, irrational force of inspiration seems at this point as difficult to control as the unruly forces of the natural world. Once again, Lucretius' certainty is undermined, as his

<sup>110</sup> On the implications of the anthropomorphic treatment of the bulls here, and of Lucretian echoes in the passage, see Gale (1991), pp. 419f., and p. 96 above.

<sup>111</sup> Note also the goat's 'Saturnian' behaviour in 316f., which echoes *Ed.* 4.21f.

<sup>112</sup> In this precise form only at 5.735, but cf. 1.103 and especially 5.99.

<sup>113</sup> In addition to 1.922–30 (discussed on pp. 191–2 above), cf. 5.97–9 (esp. *nec me animi fallit*, 'nor does it escape my mind', 97 and *quam difficile id mihi sit pervincere dictis*, 'how difficult it is for me to convince you of this with words', 99) and 1.136–45 (where Lucretius' 'peaceful nights' contrast pointedly with Virgil's excitement).



own imagery is used to suggest that the violence and passion which he condemns are uncomfortably close to the roots of his own poetic enterprise.

Before leaving book 3, we should look briefly at the ethnographical digression, 339–83. There is some suggestion here that violence and warfare lurk around the edges even of so peaceful and idyllic an occupation as the shepherd's. The contrast between the pastoral peace of temperate Italy and the extreme climates of Libya and Scythia recalls the *laudes Italiae*; nevertheless, though the shepherd's day in Italy is as idyllic as one could wish, the military imagery associated with the foreign herdsmen and hunters serves to blur the opposition between the horse as a symbol of war and the sheep as a symbol of peace.<sup>114</sup> Further complexities arise from the very different ways in which the vocabulary of war is applied to the hardy Libyan nomad and to the brutish, primitive Scythians. The African herdsman is compared to a Roman legionary, and the emphasis here is on toughness and discipline: the soldier is *acer in armis* ('zealous in arms'), and erects his camp before the enemy is aware of his presence. The prominent adjective *iniusto* ('oppressive', 347) reinforces the admiring note (though the weight of his burden is excessive, the sturdy legionary is able to bear it), but also introduces a less positive element (the burden has been *imposed* on the soldier, as *labor improbus* was imposed on the farmer by the dispensation of Jupiter in book 1). The Scythians, on the other hand, have no need of *labor*, since food is to be had for the taking. Their *otium* is not idealized, however, and the reader's sympathy lies rather with the animals trapped in the snow, which are brutally slaughtered by 'joyful' hunters.<sup>115</sup> The stag, in particular, seems almost more human than its killers: it is 'cut down at close quarters', like a soldier in battle.<sup>116</sup> The Scythians, on the other hand, are 'wild' (*effrena*,

<sup>114</sup> Cf. again *DRN* 2.317–32, where the Epicurean observer can view the peaceful grazing of sheep and the warlike activities of man with equal detachment. Virgil virtually reverses the implications of this passage: not only does the opposition between war-horse and sheep become blurred, but the forces of nature are shown to be such that man cannot remain unaffected, since he is affected by both *amor* and the plague to such an extent that he becomes virtually indistinguishable from his animals.

<sup>115</sup> Note the pathetic contrast between the animal's dying cries (*graviter* . . . *rudentis*, 'bellowing loudly', 374) and the cheerful shouts of its killers (*magno laeti clamore*, 'cheerfully, with loud shouts', 375).

<sup>116</sup> *obtrunco* ('cut down') is occasionally applied to plants or animals, but much more commonly refers to the slaughter of human beings, especially in battle (e.g. Plaut. *Amph.* 252, Sal. *Jug.* 97.5, Liv. 25.9.11). On *comminus* ('at close quarters'), see n. 75 above. Cf. Carilli (1986), pp. 180f.

382), live in underground caves and burn whole tree-trunks like Homer's Cyclops,<sup>117</sup> and dress in animal skins. The two passages taken together resemble the double perspective of the 'aetiology of *labor*', or the old tree cut down in 2.207–11. The 'warfare' of agriculture is both admirable and cruel; the farmer's life is one of thankless toil, or heroic endeavour, or ruthless repression.

In books 1, 2 and 3, then, a series of passages employ imagery of fire, storms and war to portray the violent eruption of the destructive forces which always threaten to undo the farmer's 'conquest' and 'pacification' of his crops and livestock. The bees in book 4 initially seem to be immune to these forces: they are associated with the mild climate of spring; they are free from sex, and, though they are individually vulnerable to disease, the hive as a whole is 'immortal' because of their loyalty and self-sacrifice. Even if the whole swarm should be wiped out, it can be regenerated by means of the *bougonia*. As in Varro, Virgil's bees live under a quasi-military discipline, and their life is characterized by the order and efficiency which the farmer elsewhere has to impose on nature.<sup>118</sup> But Virgil, unlike Varro, also suggests that the analogy can be applied in a more negative and disturbing way. If the bees are like ideal Romans (or perhaps ideal farmers)<sup>119</sup> in their discipline, perseverance and devotion to their *patria*, they are also like real Romans in that their warlike nature sometimes erupts in civil conflict. The battle in 67–87 closely resembles Virgil's account of the civil wars in the finale to book 1. The two passages

<sup>117</sup> Cf. *Od.* 9.233f., 319–24.

<sup>118</sup> The hive is described in terms of an army throughout the book: the military technical term *statio* ('post') is used for the more usual *situs* (=location of the hive) in 8; the swarm is an *agmen* ('marching-column', 59; cf. *Col.* 9.9.3, 9.9.7), leading up to the 'battle' in 67–87, and bees about to swarm 'take up their standards' (108; cf. Varro *R.R.* 3.16.9); the division of labour amongst the inhabitants of the hive (cf. Varro 3.16.9, *ut in exercitu*, 'as in an army') is carried on by 'treaty' (*foedere pacto*, 158), and duties include 'training' (159), guard-duty (165), scouting (166) and defence of the hive (167f.) – significantly, the whole passage is re-used as a simile in *Aen.* 1.430–6; their search for water is denoted by the military technical term *aquari* (193; elsewhere only used of armies or, following Virgil, of bees; cf. *Col.* 9.8.7, *Plin. N.H.* 11.61, *Pallad.* 5.7.1 and 5.7.4); they will give their lives in battle (204, 217f.) and are threatened by the superior force of the hornet (*imparibus . . . armis*, 'with ill-matched arms', 245). For different evaluations of the anthropomorphic treatment of the bees, see Dahlmann (1954), who regards their state as paradigmatic; and Griffin (1979), who stresses more negative aspects. On the militaristic aspect of the bees' character, see also Putnam (1979), pp. 244–61.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. esp. *exercentur agris* ('they work the fields', 4.159) with *exercet . . . tellurem* ('he works the land', 1.99), *exercebis humum* ('you will work the ground', 1.220) and *exercere solum* ('to work the soil', 2.356); cf. also 1.210, 1.268, 2.370.

are similarly structured: first the battle-lines clash (*ergo . . . concurritur*, 'so . . . they clash', 4.77f. ~ *ergo . . . concurrere*, 'so . . . they clash', 1.489); we are told where the battle took place (*aethere in alto*, 'high in the sky', 4.78 ~ *Philippi*, 1.490); and an image taken from nature is used to illustrate the fact that the 'soldiers' fell in great numbers (the fall of hail or acorns, 4.80f. ~ the soil fertilized by Roman blood, 1.491f.). The sudden change in perspective at the end of the battle, where we abruptly move from bees to beekeeper, also resembles the shift in time, to the farmer of the future, in 1.493–7. In both passages, too, the 'storm' of war is connected with literal storms and the military language which Lucretius often applies to them. As we have noted, the finale to book 1 is linked to the spring storm in 1.311–34, particularly by the repetition of the verb *concurrere*. The battle of the bees is similarly described in 'stormy' language: *glomerare* ('gather', 79) is used of the storm in 1.323 and the fire in 2.311;<sup>120</sup> and the words or phrases *concurrere* ('clash'), *fit sonitus* ('there is a noise'), *magno clamore* ('with great uproar'), *(com)miscere* ('mingle together'), *acuere* ('sharpen'), *coruscus* ('flashing'), *concussus* ('shaken') and *praecipitans* ('falling headlong') all occur in the various descriptions of storms in *DRN* 6.<sup>121</sup> Virgil's bees clash like Lucretian clouds, sharpen their sparkling weapons like Lucretian lightning, make a noise like Lucretian thunder, and fall like the hail shaken out of Lucretian thunder-clouds. The simile in 80f. makes the connexion more explicit, as the bees 'rain down' like hail or acorns.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>120</sup> Otherwise only in 3.117; in the *Aeneid*, however, the verb is used quite frequently of troops, e.g. 2.315, 2.727, 9.440, 9.689.

<sup>121</sup> Note especially the thunder- and hail-storms in 97–120 (*concurrunt*, 97, *concurrere*, 116 ~ *concurritur*, 'clash', *Geo.* 4.78; *fit . . . sonitus*, 99 ~ *fit sonitus*, 'there is a noise', *Geo.* 4.79; *denso . . . agmine*, 'in a thick mass', 100 ~ *densior*, 'thicker', *Geo.* 4.80; *grandinis imbris*, 'the rain of hail', 107 ~ *grando . . . pluit*, 'hail rains down', *Geo.* 4.80f.), 145–59 (*magno clamore*, 'with great uproar', 147 ~ *magnis . . . clamoribus*, 'with loud cries', *Geo.* 4.76; *sonitu . . . sonitu . . . sonitum*, 'with a noise . . . with a noise . . . a noise', 151, 155, 157 ~ *fit sonitus*, 'there is a noise', *Geo.* 4.79; *grandinis . . . grandine*, 'of hail . . . with hail', 157–9 ~ *grando*, 'hail', *Geo.* 4.80; and both passages contain a pair of similes) and 274–94 (*commiscuit*, 'has mingled together', 276 ~ *miscentur*, 'they mingle together', *Geo.* 4.76; *acuit*, 'sharpens', 278 ~ *exacuant*, 'they sharpen', *Geo.* 4.74; *coruscis*, 'flashing', 283 ~ *coruscant*, 'they flash', *Geo.* 4.73, *insequitur sonitus*, 'a noise follows', 285 ~ *fit sonitus*, 'there is a noise', *Geo.* 4.79; *concussa*, 'shaken', 289 ~ *concussa*, 'shaken', *Geo.* 4.81; *praecipitans*, 'falling headlong', 292 ~ *praecipites*, 'headlong', *Geo.* 4.80).

<sup>122</sup> As Mynors points out *ad loc.*, the details here are 'epic imagination', since bees do not in fact fight in the air or fall to the ground in great numbers. Thomas also asserts that the similes are 'epic'; but it is worth noting that they are not, for once, Homeric (there is only one hail simile in the *Iliad* (10.5–7), and it refers to Agamemnon's groaning, not to a battle; the acorn simile has no obvious parallel (6.146–9, cited by Thomas *ad loc.*, is not in fact very similar in either content or context)). The main intertext here is Lucretius, rather than the epic tradition – or rather, the epic tradition as used by Lucretius.

There is also something of the Lucretian 'war of the atoms' (2.112–41) here: the Lucretian *contemplator* ('observe', 61) which introduces the account of swarming is also used to direct the reader's attention to the 'battles' of dust motes, which are both analogous to and caused by the 'battles' of atoms, in *DRN* 2.114, and the confused movement of both *pugnae* is described by the same verb, *misceri* ('mingle', *DRN* 2.117 and *Geo.* 4.76). More significantly, the 'play of great and small' which is particularly prominent at the end of the Virgilian passage can be compared with Lucretius' programmatic claim

dumtaxat rerum magnarum parva potest res  
exemplare dare et vestigia notitiae. 2.123f.<sup>123</sup>

To some extent small things can show us the pattern of great ones  
and put us on the track of understanding.

The curious mixture of humour and pathos in the Virgilian passage is largely derived from this analogy between great and small: the bees are tiny, and therefore insignificant from the farmer's point of view (a handful of dust will end their grandiose struggles), but they are also like human beings. Thus, Virgil extends Lucretius' analogy between the warlike movements of tiny particles to include the wars of nature on a much larger scale, and of human beings. From one point of view, the beekeeper resembles the Lucretian philosopher, who can look on this pointless strife with detachment and equanimity. But from another, which is suggested particularly by echoes of the finale to book 1, and of the storms of 1, 2 and 3, he cannot detach himself, because he too is engaged in very similar conflicts. The farmer resembles the bees insofar as agriculture resembles warfare; the toughness and fierceness<sup>124</sup> which enable him to carry on his war against nature are akin to the *saevitia* ('savagery') of Mars, which inspires the beating of scythes into swords in the finale to book 1.<sup>125</sup> So too the conflicts and violence which are inherent in Lucretian nature are for Virgil inherent also in human nature: hence the battle of the *parvi Quirites* ('miniature Romans') is analogous to

<sup>123</sup> Cf. also Virgil's *si parva licet componere magnis* ('if one may compare small things with great'), 4.176.

<sup>124</sup> The *iratus arator* ('furious ploughman') of 2.207 springs to mind; and farmers are *duri* ('tough') in 1.160 and 4.512, like the Scipiones in 2.170 (cf. also 2.369). *durus* is a regular epithet of war or battle elsewhere in Virgil: see e.g. *Ecl.* 10.44; *Aen.* 7.807, 10.146, 11.48, 12.73.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Betensky (1979).

the 'battle' of the winds in book 1, the fire in 2, the battle of the bulls in 3. Yet there is still hope: the farmer may succeed (as in the finale to book 2) in imposing order on the chaos of nature, just as Octavian may succeed (as Virgil prays in the finale to book 1, and as seems to be the case in the *sphragis*) in controlling the runaway chariot of war. Like the beekeeper's harsh treatment of the warring bees,<sup>126</sup> this conquest will involve cruelty and loss, and we are always invited to sympathize with the victims of the struggle. Yet there is always at least the possibility that the farmer, like Lucretius' Nature, may succeed in bringing life and fertility out of death and suffering.

The interdependence of death and life, violence and creativity is suggested one last time by the rebirth of bees from the corpse of a cruelly battered heifer in the *bougonia*. As the bees pour from the body, they are compared to summer rain or the arrows of the Parthians (4.312–14). This pair of similes looks back to the pair which described the fall of bees in battle.<sup>127</sup> In both cases, the first simile refers to precipitation (hail or rain). The second simile here illustrates new birth by means of an image suggestive of war and death (Parthian arrows), reversing the earlier simile, which illustrated the fall of bees in battle by an image suggestive of fertility and life (acorns shaken from an oak tree). As in Lucretius, life begets death and death begets life. But Virgil does not leave us with a calm, detached view of this cycle. Rather, as we have seen, his reading of Lucretius, here as elsewhere, is complex and critical. Withdrawal and detachment are perhaps desirable, but may prove impossible in a world dominated on all levels by war and strife, where the farmer, his crops and his livestock are alternately the victims and the conquerors in a battle waged against nature, or with nature as ally, or between man and man.

<sup>126</sup> Especially *dede neci*, 'put to death', 90 and *regibus alas eripe*, 'tear the wings off the king-bees', 106f. On the farmer's harsh treatment of animals throughout books 3 and 4, cf. Gale (1991), pp. 425f. and pp. 101–2 above. The beekeeper's absolute power over his bees may also suggest the gods' power over human beings: cf. especially Jupiter's apparently arbitrary behaviour in 1.122–46 and 328–34.

<sup>127</sup> The verb *misceri* ('mingle', 'swarm') also recurs in 311.

*Epilogue: the philosopher and the farmer*

At the end of the introductory chapter, I proposed a reading of the *Georgics* as a profoundly open work, in which the didactic *praeceptor* passes in review a number of different ways of looking at the world, without finally allying himself to any one philosophical school or aligning himself definitively with the stance of a specific literary predecessor. I hope to have shown how such a reading can help to make sense of the tensions and conflicts which are so characteristic of this elusive poem. Some passages seem to express complete confidence in the benevolence of Jupiter, and in Octavian as his earthly counterpart; in others, Jupiter and the other gods seem distant or capricious, and the position of the *princeps* correspondingly precarious. At times, the poet seems to recommend a quasi-Epicurean withdrawal from public life, and to commit himself to the ideal of ataraxic calm and peace; elsewhere, he celebrates the virtues of *labor* in tones which are more suggestive of Stoic or traditional Roman ideals. The natural world can be perceived as indifferent to its human inhabitants (so Lucretius), or as an ideal environment providentially designed for us by a beneficent, Aratean deity; nature is characterized now as an ordered system, governed by laws and by the limits of the possible, now as chaotic, violent and mysterious. At the heart of this tangled web is the figure of the farmer, who is both admired and pitied: he is subject to endless toil and anxiety, and yet has affinities with the detached, Epicurean sage; he must curb the violent instinctive drives of his animals, which he nevertheless shares; his imposition of order on the chaotic forces of nature is paradoxically dependent on aggressive patterns of behaviour which are elsewhere associated with destruction, death and the breakdown of order.

The poem as a whole, then, offers the reader an uncertain and shifting view of the nature of things. I have argued throughout the present study that there is no strongly-marked authorial 'voice' in the *Georgics*, which might lead us to privilege one particular theological, ethical or epi-

stemological position over another. A strong sense of mystery, of the impossibility of deciding between different ways of understanding the world, is on my reading one of the most characteristic features of the poem. We might still want to argue, however, that there is a positive 'message' to be found amongst all these twists and turns, and that we are not simply left in a state of *aporia* when we reach the end of book 4. The poet's implicit rejection of dogmatism and his resistance to the uncompromising certainty and confidence in the power of reason which characterize Lucretius' poem may suggest an affinity with the sceptical tradition. In particular, the alternation between different views of the relationship between human beings and the gods which I discussed in chapter 3 can be usefully compared with the sceptical methodology adopted in Cicero's *De Natura Deorum*.<sup>1</sup>

In the opening paragraphs of the treatise, Cicero identifies himself explicitly with the scepticism of the contemporary Academy, and explains that he proposes to abide by the sceptical principle of 'suspension of judgement' (*adsensionem cohibuisse*, 1.1).<sup>2</sup> In view of the diversity of philosophical opinion on the nature of the gods, certainty is impossible; all one can do is to explore the various alternatives, without final commitment to one theory or another. This agenda is duly followed through in the body of the work: the Epicurean and Stoic positions are set out by Velleius and Balbus respectively, and each in turn is subjected to a severe critique at the hands of the Academic speaker, Cotta.

Elsewhere, however, Cicero makes it clear that the ultimate objective of this sceptical technique of arguing all sides of a given question is not nihilism, but arrival at an interim position which can be held provisionally unless and until it is proved untenable by further argument.<sup>3</sup> In the case of the *De Natura Deorum*, it becomes evident – both from the characterization of Cotta as a defender of religious tradition and the *mos maiorum* against Epicurean attack, and from the final 'vote' in 3.95<sup>4</sup> – that

<sup>1</sup> Balbus' characterization of the Academic view of the gods as *errans et vaga sententia*, as against the *stabilis certaue sententia* of the Stoics (*N.D.* 2.2), offers a particularly clear parallel for the opposition between dogmatism and agnosticism which I see as characteristic of the *Georgics*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also 1.10–12 and 2.168; on the principle of suspension of judgement, see further Long (1986), pp. 90–9 and Long and Sedley (1987), pp. 438–49. <sup>3</sup> See especially *Acad.* 2.7–8.

<sup>4</sup> For Cotta's conservatism, see 1.61 and 3.5, and cf. 1.3–4 for similar views expressed by Cicero *in propria persona*; in the concluding chapter, the narrator sides with Balbus against Cotta and Velleius (it is notable, however, that Cotta also seems more sympathetic to the Stoic position, despite his ridicule of Balbus' pantheism and faith in divine providence; see esp. 3.3, and contrast also the relative mildness of Cotta's remarks in 3.1–4 and 3.95 with his scornful handling of Epicurus and his followers in 1.57–61).

Cicero is generally sympathetic to the Stoic position. Cotta's response in book 3 to Balbus' long disquisition on the providential government of the world may suggest a desire on the part of the author to distance himself from some of the more extreme elements of Stoic doctrine; but the very fact that Balbus is allowed a whole book to make his case (more than twice the space given to Velleius) is suggestive in itself.

On my reading, the *Georgics* is much more genuinely open to different possibilities than is Cicero's dialogue. It is difficult to find anything in Virgil's poem analogous to Cicero's fairly explicit identification with the Academic and Stoic speakers at the beginning and end of the work. While the different 'voices' which constitute Virgil's polyphonic text repeatedly contradict each other, none is allowed the last word, if – as I have argued<sup>5</sup> – the end of book 4 simply restates the dilemmas explored in other parts of the poem without offering a final resolution.

Cicero's 'suspension of judgement' in the *De Natura Deorum* offers, then, only a partial parallel for the alternation between different 'voices' which I have traced in the *Georgics*. In view of the very different character of the two works, this is perhaps no more than we should expect. Virgil's poem is no philosophical treatise, still less a sceptical manifesto; and philosophical eclecticism is in any case the rule, rather than the exception, in first-century literature.<sup>6</sup> Our poet's rejection of dogma and openness to different philosophical views may owe something to the epistemological scepticism of the Academy; but the relationship between the *Georgics* and its multiple didactic intertexts is equally important. The poems of Hesiod, Aratus and Lucretius not only offer a range of incompatible views of the relationships between the gods, human beings and the natural world, but are already engaged in a kind of dialogue amongst themselves;<sup>7</sup> this multi-faceted tradition manifests itself in the *Georgics* as a prevailing air of doubt and uncertainty. (The *Aeneid*, in contrast, takes it for granted that the gods intervene in human affairs: the existence of a divine plan is a 'given' of the genre, and the notion that history is predetermined by a providential Jupiter has its roots in earlier epic, as much as in Stoic theology or Roman tradition.)<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> See esp. pp. 194–5 above. <sup>6</sup> Cf. Murrin (1980), esp. pp. 28f.

<sup>7</sup> For Hesiodic echoes in Aratus, see Solmsen (1966), James (1972) and Kidd (1997), pp. 8–10; for Hesiodic and Aratean echoes in Lucretius, see Beye (1963), Asmis (1982) and Gale (1994a), pp. 164–74 and 189–90.

<sup>8</sup> On the convergence between philosophical and poetic perspectives in the *Aeneid*, cf. Feeney (1991), pp. 129–87: Feeney traces the influence of allegorizing Homeric criticism on Virgil's representation of the divine pantheon, but also insists that his gods are not mere symbols but remain 'as real as Aeneas, as real as Dido' (p. 187).



In one sense, then, what is distinctively Virgilian about the *Georgics* is precisely its refusal to take up a well-defined position: it enters the didactic tradition as a critical response to the certainties expressed in earlier poems, and invites the reader to question rather than to accept a particular world-view. At the same time, however, didactic is by definition poetry which teaches something; and the Virgilian *praeceptor* dispenses advice to his reader with as much apparent conviction as any of his predecessors. Perhaps, then, we should allow more prominence to the didactic surface of the poem: explicit exhortations to work and piety are perhaps not wholly displaced by uncertainties about the value of *labor* and the nature of the gods which arise from Virgil's repeated evocation of the very different value-systems of his didactic intertexts. To put it another way, we might want to suggest that – while the *Georgics* is on one level a response to Lucretius' rationalistic account of the nature of the universe in general – understanding is in the last analysis subordinated to action. What the farmer (or the politician) *does* is ultimately more important than what he believes. Here, again, Cicero's dialogue offers an instructive parallel. I suggested at the end of chapter 3 that the sceptical yet conservative stance adopted by Cotta in the *De Natura Deorum* can usefully be compared with that of the Virgilian *praeceptor*. Cotta's emphatic assertion that he will defend the *mos maiorum* to his last breath, despite his claims to know nothing about the nature of the gods, draws an explicit opposition between ritual and belief which is also hinted at in the *Georgics*. Despite the contradictory ways in which the gods and their intervention in the human world (or lack of it) are represented in different parts of the poem, the motto *in primis venerare deos* ('above all, worship the gods', 1.338) still stands. The plague-ridden Norici still struggle to carry out the rites of Juno, even though the gods seem deaf to their prayers; and Aristaeus' careful performance of divine ordinance is duly rewarded in the poem's closing lines. We could extract a similar 'message' from the political and social subtexts which can be discerned in the poet's agricultural instruction: despite all the suffering entailed by the farmer's activities, despite his sometimes brutal handling of his crops and livestock, his ultimate aim is the positive one of ensuring fertility, continuity and plenty.<sup>9</sup> So too the ruler must *impose* peace on his subjects, as Anchises tells us in *Aeneid* 6.852. We may pity the defeated, as we pity the old horse of 3.95–100 or the heroic bee-warriors

<sup>9</sup> Note especially 2.207–11, 2.362–70, 3.95–100, 3.457–69, 4.86–115, with the discussion on pp. 101–2 and 252–9 above.

of 4.86f., and yet see their suffering as necessary for the achievement of a higher goal.

Once again, though, this is only part of the story. The opposition between action and understanding, between the practical and contemplative lives, is itself thematized in two prominent passages, the double *makarismos* at the end of book 2, and the Aristaeus epyllion. In both places, the hierarchy which I posited in the last paragraph is reversed. At the very heart of the poem, Hesiodic agricultural didactic is apparently treated as a second-best option and subordinated to Lucretian science;<sup>10</sup> and at the conclusion of the work, the poet seems to identify himself more closely with the unpractical and unproductive singer Orpheus than with the successful farmer Aristaeus or the conquering hero Caesar. The poet and the lover stand out as representatives of passion and individualism; their system of values presents a challenge both to the clinical rationalism of Lucretius and to the rigid order imposed by the farmer, or dispensed by Octavian to his 'willing subjects' (4.561f.).

In sum, the *Georgics* finally presents the reader with more questions than answers. I have suggested in these concluding remarks (and it will also be clear from the history of the poem's reception) that it is possible to construct a reading according to which Virgil has a positive message: speculation has its place in human life, but action is ultimately more important; piety has its value even if the nature of the gods remains obscure to mere mortals; peace and order are worthy goals which transcend the suffering of the individual. We might call this the Aristaeian reading of the poem. Conversely, we can emphasize elements in the poem which subvert and undermine this positive surface: the rejection of Lucretian (and Aratean) dogmatism; pity for the individual; problematization of the idea that war can ever serve as an instrument for the imposition of peace. This latter, 'Orphic', reading has been more popular with the critics of recent decades. I have tried, in the preceding chapters, to put forward an interpretation of the poem in which both voices have their place: Virgil offers his reader different ways of understanding the world, but does not give us any clear indication of how we are to choose between them. The hero of the *Georgics* is no godlike philosopher, pointing out the road that leads to salvation, but the poor farmer, ignorant of the way and unable to understand the blessings which he (at times) enjoys.

<sup>10</sup> As noted in chapter 2, however, the reference of lines 485–9 and 493–4 is not unproblematic: see pp. 42–3 above.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, J. N. (1982) *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary*. London.
- Albert, S. (1980) *Bellum iustum. Die Theorie des 'gerechten Krieges' und ihre praktische Bedeutung für die auswärtigen Auseinandersetzungen Roms in republikanischer Zeit*. Kallmünz.
- Altevogt, H. (1952) *Labor Improbis. Eine Vergilstudie*. Münster.
- Anderson, W. B. (1933) 'Gallus and the Fourth Georgic', *CQ* 27: 36–45.
- Asmis, E. (1982) 'Lucretius' Venus and Stoic Zeus', *Hermes* 110: 458–70.
- (1995) 'Epicurean Poetics'. In *Philodemus and Poetry: Poetic Theory and Practice in Lucretius, Philodemus and Horace*, ed. D. Obbink. Oxford and New York: 15–34.
- Augello, G. (1974) 'Divini Gloria Ruris', *RCCM* 16: 137–63.
- Bailey, C. (1947) *Lucretius: De Rerum Natura*. 3 vols. Oxford.
- Barchiesi, A. (1981) 'Letture e trasformazioni di un mito arateo (Cic. Arat. xvii Tr.; Verg. Georg. 2, 473 sg.)', *MD* 6: 181–7.
- (1982) 'Lettura del secondo libro delle Georgiche'. In *Lecturae Vergilianae*, ed. M. Gigante. Naples: 2.41–86.
- Barchiesi, A. and Conte, G. B. (1989) 'Imitazione e arte allusiva. Modi e funzioni dell' intertestualità'. In *Lo spazio letterario di Roma antica*, edd. G. Cavallo, P. Fedeli and A. Giardina. Rome: 1.81–114.
- Batstone, W. W. (1994) 'Georgics 1.181: *inludunt* and the Scope of Vergilian Pessimism', *CPh* 89: 261–8.
- Beagon, M. (1992) *Roman Nature: The Thought of Pliny the Elder*. Oxford.
- Becker, O. (1937) *Das Bild des Weges und verwandte Vorstellungen im frühgriechischen Denken*. Hermes Einzelschr. 4. Berlin.
- Ben-Porat, Z. (1976) 'The Poetics of Literary Allusion', *PTL* 1: 105–28.
- Bertoli, E. (1980) *Tempora rerum: Modalità del progresso umano in Lucrezio*. Verona.
- Betensky, A. (1972) 'The Literary Use of Animals in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* and Virgil's *Georgics*', Diss. Yale.
- (1979) 'The Farmer's Battles', *Ramus* 8: 108–19.
- Beye, C. R. (1963) 'Lucretius and Progress', *CJ* 58: 160–9.

- Blank, D. (1995) 'Philodemus on the Technicity of Rhetoric'. In *Philodemus and Poetry: Poetic Theory and Practice in Lucretius, Philodemus and Horace*, ed. D. Obbink. Oxford and New York: 178–88.
- Blömer, F. (1957–8) *P. Ovidius Naso: Die Fasten*. Heidelberg.
- (1969–86) *P. Ovidius Naso: Metamorphosen*. Heidelberg.
- Botermann, H. (1987) 'Ciceros Gedanken zum "gerechten Krieg" in *de officiis* 1, 34–40', *AKG* 69: 1–29.
- Boyancé, P. (1980) 'La religion des *Géorgiques* à la lumière des travaux récents' *ANRW* 2.31.1: 549–73.
- Boyle, A. J. (1979) 'In Medio Caesar: Paradox and Politics in Virgil's *Georgics*', *Ramus* 8: 65–86.
- Bradley, A. (1969) 'Augustan Culture and a Radical Alternative: Vergil's *Georgics*', *Arion* 8: 347–58.
- Bright, D. (1971) 'The Plague and the Structure of *De Rerum Natura*', *Latomus* 30: 607–32.
- Brown, R. D. (1982) 'Lucretius and Callimachus', *ICS* 7: 77–97.
- (1987) *Lucretius on Love and Sex: A Commentary on De Rerum Natura IV, 1030–1287*. Leiden.
- Brunt, P. A. (1978) 'Laus imperii'. In *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, edd. P. D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker. Cambridge: 159–91.
- Buchheit, V. (1972) *Der Anspruch des Dichters in Vergils Georgica. Dichtertum und Heilsweg*. Darmstadt.
- Buffière, F. (1956) *Les mythes d'Homère et la pensée grecque*. Paris.
- Burck, E. (1956) 'Der korykische Greis in Vergils Georgika (IV 116–148)'. In *Navicula Chiloniensis. Studia philologa F. Jacoby Professori Chiloniensi emerito octogenario oblata*. Leiden: 156–72.
- Burkert, W. (1983) *Homo Necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth*, trans. P. Bing. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London.
- Canter, H. V. (1930) 'The Figure ΑΔΥΝΑΤΟΝ in Greek and Latin Poetry', *AJP* 51: 32–41.
- Carilli, M. (1986) 'Aspetti lessicali dell'umanizzazione di elementi naturali nelle *Georgiche*: la terminologia del "labor" e del "bellum"', *CCC* 7: 171–84.
- Catto, B. (1986) 'Lucretian *labor* and Vergil's *labor improbus*', *CJ* 81: 305–18.
- Clare, R. J. (1995) 'Chiron, Melampus and Tisiphone: Myth and Meaning in Virgil's Plague of Noricum', *Hermathena* 158: 95–108.
- Clausen, W. (1994) *A Commentary on Virgil: Eclogues*. Oxford.
- Clay, D. (1983) *Lucretius and Epicurus*. Ithaca and London.
- Clay, J. S. (1976) 'The Argument at the End of Vergil's Second *Georgic*', *Philologus* 120: 232–45.
- (1989) 'The Old Man in the Garden: *Georgic* 4.116–48'. In *Old Age in Greek and Latin Literature*, edd. T. M. Falkner and J. de Luce. Albany: 183–94.
- Clayton, J. and Rothstein, E. edd. (1991a) *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary*

- History*. Madison, Wisconsin.
- (1991b) 'Figures in the Corpus: Theories of Influence and Intertextuality'. In Clayton and Rothstein (1991a): 3–36.
- Cloud, D. (1993) 'Roman Poetry and Anti-Militarism'. In *War and Society in the Roman World*, edd. J. Rich and G. Shipley. London: 113–38.
- Coleman, R. (1962) 'Gallus, the Bucolics and the Ending of the Fourth Georgic', *AJP* 83: 55–71.
- (1977) *Vergil: Eclogues*. Cambridge.
- Commager, H. S. (1957) 'Lucretius' Interpretation of the Plague', *HSCP* 62: 105–18.
- Conington, J. and Nettleship, H. (1898) *The Works of Virgil, with a Commentary*, vol. 1, 5th edition. London.
- Conte, G. B. (1966) 'Υψος e diatriba nello stile di Lucrezio', *Maia* 18: 338–68.
- (1986) *The Rhetoric of Imitation: Genre and Poetic Memory in Virgil and Other Latin Poets*, trans. C. P. Segal. Ithaca and London.
- (1992) 'Proems in the Middle', *YCS* 29: 147–59.
- (1994) *Genres and Readers: Lucretius, Love Elegy, Pliny's Encyclopedia*, trans. G. W. Most. Baltimore and London.
- Cucchiarelli, A. (1994) 'Lucrezio, *de rer. nat.* IV 984: *voluntas* o *voluptas*?', *SIFC* ser. 3.12: 50–102 and 208–53.
- Dahlmann, H. (1954) 'Die Bienenstaat in Vergils Georgica', *AAWM* 10: 547–62 (= *Kleine Schriften* (Hildesheim 1970): 181–96).
- De Lacy, P. H. (1957) 'Process and Value: An Epicurean Dilemma', *TAPA* 88: 114–26.
- (1964) 'Distant Views: The Imagery of Lucretius 2', *CJ* 60: 49–55.
- (1969) 'Limit and Variation in Epicurean Philosophy', *Phoenix* 23: 104–13.
- Della Corte, F. ed. (1984–91) *Enciclopedia Virgiliana*. Rome.
- Détienne, M. (1963) *Crise agraire et attitude religieuse chez Hésiode*. Coll. Latomus 68. Brussels.
- Deufert, M. (1996) *Pseudo-Lukrezisches im Lukrez. Die unechten Verse in Lukrezens 'De Rerum Natura'*. Berlin.
- Dewar, M. J. (1988) 'Octavian and Orestes in the Finale of the First Georgic', *CQ* 38: 263–5.
- (1990) 'Octavian and Orestes Again', *CQ* 40: 580–2.
- Dickie, M. W. (1983) 'Invidia infelix: Vergil, *Georgics* 3.37–39', *ICS* 8: 65–79.
- Dierauer, U. (1977) *Tier und Mensch im Denken der Antike. Ideengeschichtliche Studien zur Tierpsychologie, Anthropologie und Ethik*. Amsterdam.
- Diggle, J. (1970) *Euripides: Phaethon*. Cambridge.
- Dion, J. (1993) *Les passions dans l'oeuvre de Virgile: Poétique et philosophie*. Nancy.
- Dionigi, I. (1977) 'Contaminazione ed arte allusiva in *Georg.* 2, 510 e 523sg.'. In *Atti del convegno virgiliano sul bimillenario delle Georgiche*. Naples: 345–54.
- Dutoit, E. (1936) *Le thème de l' adynaton dans la poésie antique*. Paris.

- Dyson, J. T. (1996) 'Caesi iuveni and pietas impia in Virgil', *CJ* 91: 277–86.
- Eco, U. (1981) *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts*. London.
- Edwards, M. W. (1987) *Homer: Poet of the Iliad*. Baltimore and London.
- Effe, B. (1977) *Dichtung und Lehre. Untersuchungen zur Typologie des antiken Lehrgedichts*. Munich.
- Fantham, E. (1992) 'Ceres, Liber and Flora: Georgic and Anti-Georgic Elements in Ovid's *Fasti*', *PCPS* 38: 39–56.
- Farrell, J. (1983) 'Thematic Allusion to Lucretius in Vergil's *Georgics*', Diss. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- (1991) *Vergil's Georgics and the Traditions of Ancient Epic: The Art of Allusion in Literary History*. New York.
- (1994) 'The Structure of Lucretius' "Anthropology"', *MD* 33: 81–95.
- Farrington, B. (1958) 'Vergil and Lucretius', *AClass* 1: 45–50.
- (1963) 'Polemical Allusions to the *De Rerum Natura* of Lucretius in the Works of Vergil'. In *Geras: Studies Presented to G. Thomson*, edd. L. Varcl and R. F. Willetts. Prague: 87–94.
- Feeney, D. C. (1991) *The Gods in Epic: Poets and Critics of the Classical Tradition*. Oxford.
- (1998) *Literature and Religion at Rome: Cultures, Contexts and Beliefs*. Cambridge.
- Ferrero, L. (1949) *Poetica nuova in Lucrezio*. Florence.
- Festa, N. (1902) *Mythographi Graeci*, vol. 3.2. Leipzig.
- Festugière, A. J. (1955) *Epicurus and his Gods*, trans. C. W. Chilton. Oxford.
- Fitzgerald, W. (1996) 'Labor and the Laborer in Latin Poetry: The Case of the *Moretum*', *Arethusa* 29: 389–418.
- Fontenrose, J. (1974) 'Work, Justice and Hesiod's Five Ages', *CPh* 69: 1–16.
- Forbes Irving, P. M. C. (1990) *Metamorphosis in Greek Myths*. Oxford.
- Foster, J. (1988) 'The End of the Third *Georgic*', *PVS* 19: 32–45.
- Fowler, D. P. (1989a) 'Lucretius and Politics'. In *Philosophia Togata: Essays on Philosophy and Roman Society*, edd. M. Griffin and J. Barnes. Oxford: 120–50.
- (1989b) 'First Thoughts on Closure: Problems and Prospects', *MD* 22: 75–122.
- (1997) 'On the Shoulders of Giants: Intertextuality and Classical Studies', *MD* 39: 13–34.
- Fowler, P. G. (1997) 'Lucretian Conclusions'. In *Classical Closure: Reading the End in Greek and Latin Literature*, edd. D. H. Roberts, F. M. Dunn and D. P. Fowler. Princeton: 112–38.
- Frentz, W. (1967) *Mythologisches in Vergils Georgica*. Meisenheim am Glan.
- Freudenburg, K. (1987) 'Lucretius, Vergil and the *causa morbi*', *Vergilius* 33: 59–74.

- Friedmann, S. S. (1991) 'Weavings: Intertextuality and the (Re)birth of the Author'. In Clayton and Rothstein (1991a): 146–80.
- Furley, D. J. (1970) 'Variations on Themes from Empedocles in Lucretius' Proem', *BICS* 17: 55–64.
- (1978) 'Lucretius the Epicurean: On the History of Man', *Entretiens Hardt* 24: 1–37.
- Gale, M. R. (1991) 'Man and Beast in Lucretius and the *Georgics*', *CQ* 41: 414–26.
- (1994a) *Myth and Poetry in Lucretius*. Cambridge.
- (1994b) 'Lucretius 4.1–25 and the Proems of the *De Rerum Natura*', *PCPS* 40: 1–17.
- (1997a) 'Propertius 2.7: *Militia amoris* and the Ironies of Elegy', *JRS* 87: 77–91.
- (1997b) 'The Shield of Turnus (*Aeneid* 7.783–92)', *G&R* 44: 176–96.
- Gatz, B. (1967) *Weltalter, goldene Zeit und sinnverwandte Vorstellungen*. Hildesheim.
- Geffcken, J. (1892) 'Saturnia Tellus', *Hermes* 27: 381–8.
- Giancotti, F. (1959) *Il preludio di Lucrezio*. Messina and Florence.
- Giangrande, G. (1967) "'Arte allusiva" and Alexandrian Epic Poetry', *CQ* 17: 85–97.
- Giannini, A. (1963) 'Studi sulla paradossografia greca I. Da Omero a Callimaco: motivi e forme del meraviglioso', *Rend. Ist. Lombard.* 97: 247–66.
- (1964) 'Studi sulla paradossografia greca II. Da Callimaco all'età imperiale: la letteratura paradossografica', *Acme* 17: 99–140.
- (1967) *Paradoxographorum Graecorum reliquiae*. Milan.
- Glei, R. F. (1991) *Der Vater der Dinge. Interpretationen zur politischen, literarischen und kulturellen Dimension des Krieges bei Vergil*. Trier.
- Griffin, J. (1979) 'The Fourth *Georgic*, Virgil and Rome', *G&R* 26: 61–80.
- (1995) 'Regalis inter mensas laticemque Lyaeum: Wine in Virgil and Others'. In *In Vino Veritas*, edd. O. Murray and M. Tecusan. London: 283–96.
- Grimal, P. (1964) 'Invidia infelix et la "conversion" de Virgile'. In *Hommages à J. Bayet*, edd. M. Renard and R. Schilling. Coll. Latomus 70. Brussels: 242–54.
- (1984) *Les jardins romains*, 3rd edition. Paris.
- Haberman, L. (1977) 'Varro and Two Military Similes in Virgil's *Georgics*', *CB* 53: 54–6.
- Habinek, T. N. (1990) 'Sacrifice, Society and Virgil's Ox-Born Bees'. In *Cabinet of the Muses: Essays on Classical and Comparative Literature in Honor of T. G. Rosenmeyer*, edd. M. Griffith and D. J. Mastronarde. Atlanta: 209–23.
- Halperin, D. M. (1990) 'Pastoral Violence in the *Georgics*: Commentary on Ross', *Arethusa* 23: 77–93.
- Hardie, P. R. (1986) *Virgil's Aeneid: Cosmos and Imperium*. Oxford.
- (1995) 'The Speech of Pythagoras in Ovid *Metamorphoses* 15: Empedoclean *Epos*', *CQ* 45: 204–14.

- (1996) 'Virgil: A Paradoxical Poet?', *PLLS* 9: 103–21.
- (1998) *Virgil. Greece and Rome New Surveys in the Classics* 28. Oxford.
- Härke, G. (1936) 'Studien zur Exkurstechnik im römischen Lehrgedicht (Lukrez und Vergil). Mit einem Anhang über Manilius', Diss. Freiburg im Breisgau.
- Harris, W. V. (1979) *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327–70 BC*. Oxford.
- Harrison, E. L. (1979) 'The Noric Plague in Vergil's Third *Georgic*', *PLLS* 2: 1–65.
- Hauser, M. (1954) *Der römische Begriff cura*. Winterthur.
- Heath, M. (1985) 'Hesiod's Didactic Poetry', *CQ* 35: 245–63.
- Hebel, U. (1991) 'Towards a Descriptive Poetics of *Allusion*'. In Plett (1991a): 135–64.
- Henry, E. (1992) *Orpheus with his Lute: Poetry and the Renewal of Life*. London.
- Hickson, F. V. (1993) *Roman Prayer Language: Livy and the Aeneid of Vergil*. Stuttgart.
- Hiller von Gaertringen, F. (1896) 'Aristaios', *RE* 2: 852–9.
- Hinds, S. (1998) *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry*. Cambridge.
- Hine, H. (1995) 'Seneca, Stoicism and the Problem of Moral Evil'. In *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, edd. D. Innes, H. Hine and C. Pelling. Oxford: 93–106.
- Hollis, A. S. (1990) *Callimachus: Hecale*. Oxford.
- (1996) 'Octavian in the Fourth *Georgic*', *CQ* 46: 305–8.
- Holthuis, S. (1994) 'Intertextuality and Meaning Construction: An Approach to the Comprehension of Intertextual Poetry'. In *Approaches to Poetry: Some Aspects of Textuality, Intertextuality and Intermediality*, ed. J. S. Petöfi and T. Olivi. Berlin and New York: 77–93.
- Hunter, R. L. (1989) 'Bulls and Boxers in Apollonius and Vergil', *CQ* 39: 557–61.
- (1995) 'Written in the Stars: Poetry and Philosophy in the *Phainomena* of Aratus', *Arachnion* 2, <http://www.cisi.unito.it/arachne/arachne.html>.
- Inwood, B. (1992) *The Poem of Empedocles: A Text and Translation*. Phoenix Suppl. 29. Toronto.
- Jahn, P. (1903a) 'Die Quellen und Muster des ersten Buchs der Georgica Vergils (bis Vers 350) und ihre Bearbeitung durch den Dichter', *RhM* 58: 391–426.
- (1903b) 'Eine Prosaquelle Vergils und ihre Umsetzung in Poesie durch den Dichter', *Hermes* 38: 244–64.
- (1904) 'Aus Vergils Dichterwerkstätte (Georgica IV 1–280)', *Philologus* 63: 66–93.
- (1905) 'Aus Vergils Dichterwerkstätte (Georgica III 49–470)', *RhM* 60: 361–87.
- Jal, P. (1963) *La guerre civile à Rome. Etude littéraire et morale*. Paris.
- James, A. W. (1972) 'The Zeus Hymns of Cleanthes and Aratus', *Antichthon* 6: 28–38.



- Janko, R. (1992) *The Iliad: A Commentary. Vol. IV: Books 13–16*. Cambridge.
- Janson, T. (1964) *Latin Prose Prefaces: Studies in Literary Conventions*. Stockholm.
- Jenkyns, R. (1993) 'Labor improbus', *CQ* 43: 243–8.
- Jermyn, L. A. S. (1951) 'Weather-Signs in Virgil', *G&R* 20: 26–37 and 49–59.
- Johnston, P. A. (1980) *Vergil's Agricultural Golden Age: A Study of the Georgics*. Mnemosyne Suppl. 60. Leiden.
- Joep, J. (1989) 'The Didactic Unity and Emotional Import of Book 6 of *De Rerum Natura*', *Phoenix* 43: 16–34.
- Kahn, C. H. (1979) *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus: An Edition of the Fragments with Translation and Commentary*. Cambridge.
- Kaiser, E. (1964) 'Odyssee-Szenen als Topoi', *MH* 21: 109–36 and 197–224.
- Keith, A. M. (1992) *The Play of Fictions: Studies in Ovid's Metamorphoses Book 2*. Ann Arbor.
- Kenney, E. J. (1970) 'Doctus Lucretius', *Mnemosyne* ser. 4.23: 366–92.  
(1971) *Lucretius: De Rerum Natura Book III*. Cambridge.
- Ketteman, R. (1982) 'Das Finale des 3. Georgica-Buches', *WJA* 8: 23–33.
- Kidd, D. A. (1997) *Aratus: Phaenomena*. Cambridge.
- Kiessling, A. and Heinze, R. (1966) *Q. Horatius Flaccus: Oden und Epoden*, 12th edition. Dublin and Zürich.
- Kirk, G. S. (1970) *Myth: Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures*. Cambridge.
- Klepl, H. (1967) *Lukrez und Vergil in ihren Lehrgedichten*. Darmstadt.
- Klingner, F. (1931) 'Über das Lob des Landlebens in Virgils Georgica', *Hermes* 66: 159–89.  
(1963) *Virgils Georgica*. Zürich.
- Konstan, D. (1973) *Some Aspects of Epicurean Psychology*. Leiden.
- Korenjak, M. (1995) 'Parthenope und Parthenias. Zur Sphragis der Georgika', *Mnemosyne* 48: 201–2.
- Kraggerud, E. (1998) 'Vergil Announcing the *Aeneid*: On *Georg.* 3.1–48'. In *Vergil's Aeneid: Augustan Epic and Political Context*, ed. H. P. Stahl. London: 1–20.
- Kristeva, J. (1980) *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, trans. T. Gora, A. Jardine and L. S. Roudiez. New York.
- Kristol, S. S. (1990) *Labor and Fortuna in Virgil's Aeneid*. New York and London.
- Laird, A. J. W. (1999) *Powers of Expression, Expressions of Power: Speech Presentation and Latin Literature*. Oxford.
- Landolfi, L. (1991) 'Virgilio e "l'interludio della memoria" (*Georg.* IV, 125–48)'. In *Studi di filologia classica in onore di Giusto Monaco*. Palermo: 2.907–18.
- La Penna, A. (1977) 'Senex Corycius'. In *Atti del convegno virgiliano sul bimillenario delle Georgiche*. Naples: 37–66.
- Lau, D. (1975) *Der lateinische Begriff labor*. Munich.

- Leach, E. W. (1977) 'Sedes apibus: From the *Georgics* to the *Aeneid*', *Vergilius* 23: 2–16.
- Lee, M. O. (1996) *Virgil as Orpheus: A Study of the Georgics*. New York.
- Leigh, M. (1994) 'Servius on Vergil's Senex Corycius: New Evidence', *MD* 33: 181–95.
- Lenaghan, L. (1967) 'Lucretius 1.921–50', *TAPA* 98: 221–51.
- Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G. (1979) *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*. Oxford.
- Liebeschuetz, W. (1965) 'Beast and Man in the Third Book of Virgil's *Georgics*', *G&R* 12: 64–77.
- (1968) 'The Cycle of Growth and Decay in Lucretius and Virgil', *PVS* 7: 30–40.
- Long, A. A. (1977) 'Chance and Natural Law in Epicureanism', *Phronesis* 22: 63–88.
- (1986) *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*, 2nd edition. London.
- Long, A. A. and Sedley, D. N. (1987) *The Hellenistic Philosophers*. Cambridge.
- Loupiac, A. (1992) 'Le labor chez Virgile. Essai d'interprétation', *REL* 70: 92–106.
- Lovejoy, A. and Boas, G. (1935) *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*. Baltimore.
- Lumpe, A. (1977) [Review of Lau (1975)], *Gnomon* 49: 418f.
- Lundström, S. (1976) 'Der Eingang des Proömiums zum dritten Buche der Georgika', *Hermes* 104: 163–91.
- Lyne, R. O. A. M. (1974) 'Scilicet et tempus veniet . . . : Virgil, *Georgics* 1.463–514'. In *Quality and Pleasure in Latin Poetry*, edd. A. J. Woodman and D. A. West. Cambridge: 47–66.
- (1978) *Ciris: A Poem Attributed to Vergil*. Cambridge.
- (1980) *The Latin Love Poets from Catullus to Horace*. Oxford.
- (1983) 'Vergil and the Politics of War', *CQ* 33: 188–203.
- (1987) *Further Voices in Vergil's Aeneid*. Oxford.
- (1993) [Review of Mynors (1990)], *JRS* 83: 203–6.
- (1994) 'Virgil's *Aeneid*: Subversion by Intertextuality. Catullus 66.39–40 and Other Examples', *G&R* 41: 187–204.
- McCabe, M. M. (1992) 'Myth, Allegory and Argument in Plato', *Apeiron* 25: 47–67.
- Maggiuli, G. (1995) *Incipient silvae cum primum surgere: Mondo vegetale e nomenclatura della flora di Virgilio*. Rome.
- Mai, H. P. (1991) 'Bypassing Intertextuality: Hermeneutics, Textual Practice, Hypertext'. In Plett (1991a): 30–59.
- Maltby, R. (1991) *A Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies*. Leeds.
- Marasco, G. (1990) 'Corycius Senex (Verg. *Georg.* 4, 127)', *RFIC* 118: 402–7.
- Mayer, R. (1990) 'The Epic of Lucretius', *Papers of the Leeds International Latin*

*Seminar* 6: 35–43.

Midgley, M. (1973) 'The Concept of Beastliness: Philosophy, Ethics and Animal Behaviour', *Philosophy* 48: 111–35.

Miles, G. B. (1975) 'Georgics 3.209–294: *Amor* and Civilization', *CSCA* 8: 177–97.

(1980) *Virgil's Georgics: A New Interpretation*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London.

Minadeo, R. (1965) 'The Formal Design of *De Rerum Natura*', *Arion* 4: 444–61.

(1969) *The Lyre of Science: Form and Meaning in Lucretius' De Rerum Natura*. Detroit.

Minyard, J. D. (1985) *Lucretius and the Late Republic: An Essay in Roman Intellectual History*. Mnemosyne Suppl. 90. Leiden.

Murgatroyd, P. (1975) 'Militia Amoris and the Roman Elegists', *Latomus* 34: 59–79.

Murley, C. (1947) 'Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, Viewed as Epic', *TAPA* 78: 336–46.

Murrin, M. (1980) *The Allegorical Epic: Essays in its Rise and Decline*. Chicago and London.

Myers, K. S. (1994) *Ovid's Causes: Cosmology and Aetiology in the Metamorphoses*. Ann Arbor.

Mynors, R. A. B. (1990) *Virgil: Georgics*. Oxford.

Nethercut, W. R. (1973) 'Vergil's *De Rerum Natura*', *Ramus* 2: 41–52.

Nisbet, R. G. M. (1990) 'The *Georgics* [review of Thomas (1988)]', *CR* 40: 260–3.

Nisbet, R. G. M. and Hubbard, M. (1970) *A Commentary on Horace Odes, Book I*. Oxford.

(1978) *A Commentary on Horace Odes, Book II*. Oxford.

Nosarti, L. (1996) *Studi sulle Georgiche di Virgilio*. Padua.

Novara, A. (1982) 'La *physica philosophia* et le bonheur d'après Virgile, *Géorg.*, II v. 490–492', *REL* 60: 234–47.

Ogilvie, R. M. (1965) *A Commentary on Livy Books 1–5*. Oxford.

O'Hara, J. J. (1993) 'Dido as "Interpreting Character" at *Aeneid* 4.56–66', *Arethusa* 26: 99–114.

(1994) 'They Might Be Giants: Inconsistency and Indeterminacy in Vergil's War in Italy', *Colby Quarterly* 30: 206–32.

(1996) *True Names: Vergil and the Alexandrian Tradition of Etymological Word Play*. Ann Arbor.

Oksala, T. (1978) *Studien zum Verständnis der Einheit und der Bedeutung von Vergils Georgica*. Helsinki.

O'Loughlin, M. (1978) *The Garlands of Repose: The Literary Celebration of Civic and Retired Leisure*. Chicago and London.

Osborne, C. (1987) 'Empedocles Recycled', *CQ* 37: 24–50.

- Otis, B. (1964) *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry*. Oxford.
- Otto, A. (1890) *Die Sprichwörter und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der Römer*. Leipzig.
- Parry, A. (1972) 'The Idea of Art in Virgil's *Georgics*', *Arethusa* 5: 35–52.
- Paschalis, M. (1984) 'Notes on the First Proem of the *Georgics* in its Relation to the Proems of Lucretius', *Hellenica* 35: 143–6.
- Pasquali, G. (1951) 'Arte allusiva'. In *Stravaganze quarte e supreme*. Venice: 11–20.
- Paul, G. M. (1982) 'Urbs capta: Sketch of an Ancient Literary Motif', *Phoenix* 36: 144–55.
- Pease, A. S. (1955) *M. Tulli Ciceronis De Natura Deorum*. Cambridge, Mass.
- (1973) *M. Tulli Ciceronis De Divinatione Libri Duo*. Darmstadt.
- Pépin, J. (1958) *Mythe et allégorie. Les origines grecques et les contestations judéo-chrétiennes*. Paris.
- Perkell, C. G. (1981) 'On the Corycian Gardener of Vergil's Fourth Georgic', *TAPA* 111: 167–77.
- (1989) *The Poet's Truth: A Study of the Poet in Virgil's Georgics*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London.
- Plett, H. F. ed. (1991a) *Intertextuality*. Berlin and New York.
- (1991b) 'Intertextualities'. In Plett (1991a): 3–29.
- Pöschl, V. (1962) *The Art of Vergil: Image and Symbol in the Aeneid*, trans. G. Seligson. Ann Arbor.
- Possanza, M. (1990) 'The Text of Lucretius 2.1174', *CQ* 40: 459–64.
- Putnam, M. C. J. (1979) *Virgil's Poem of the Earth: Studies in the Georgics*. Princeton.
- Reckford, K. J. (1958) 'Some Appearances of the Golden Age', *CJ* 54: 79–87.
- Reynen, H. (1965) 'Ewiger Frühling und goldene Zeit. Zum Mythos des goldenen Zeitalters bei Ovid und Vergil', *Gymnasium* 72: 415–33.
- Riffaterre, M. (1990) *Fictional Truth*. Baltimore and London.
- Rist, J. M. (1972) *Epicurus: An Introduction*. Cambridge.
- Rocca, S. (1983) *Etologia Virgiliana*. Genoa.
- Rosenmeyer, T. G. (1969) *The Green Cabinet: Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London.
- Rösler, W. (1970) *Reflexe vorsokratischen Denkens bei Aischylos*. Meisenheim am Glan.
- Ross, D. O. (1975) *Backgrounds to Augustan Poetry: Gallus, Elegy and Rome*. Cambridge.
- (1980) 'Non sua poma: Varro, Virgil and Grafting', *ICS* 5: 63–71.
- (1987) *Virgil's Elements: Physics and Poetry in the Georgics*. Princeton.
- Rutherford, R. (1995) 'Authorial Rhetoric in Virgil's *Georgics*'. In *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, edd. D. Innes, H. Hine and C. Pelling. Oxford: 19–29.

- Schäfer, E. (1983) 'Die Wende zur Augusteischen Literatur. Vergils *Georgica* und Octavian', *Gymnasium* 90: 77–101.
- Schäfer, S. (1996) *Das Weltbild der Vergilischen Georgika in seinem Verhältnis zu De Rerum Natura des Lukrez*. Frankfurt am Main.
- Scheid, J. (1985) *Religion et piété à Rome*. Paris.
- Schiesaro, A. (1990) *Simulacrum et imago: Gli argomenti analogici nel De Rerum Natura*. Pisa.
- (1997) 'The Boundaries of Knowledge in Virgil's *Georgics*'. In *The Roman Cultural Revolution*, edd. T. Habinek and A. Schiesaro. Cambridge: 63–89.
- Schlam, C. C. (1992) *The Metamorphoses of Apuleius: On Making an Ass of Oneself*. London.
- Schrijvers, P. H. (1970) *Horror ac divina voluptas: Etudes sur la poétique et la poésie de Lucrèce*. Amsterdam.
- Sedley, D. N. (1989) 'The Proems of Empedocles and Lucretius', *GRBS* 30: 269–96.
- Segal, C. P. (1966) 'Orpheus and the Fourth *Georgic*: Vergil on Nature and Civilization', *AJP* 87: 307–25.
- (1970a) 'Delubra decora: Lucr. II.352–66', *Latomus* 29: 104–18.
- (1970b) 'Catullan *otiosi*: The Lover and the Poet', *G&R* 17: 25–31.
- (1986) 'War, Death and Savagery in Lucretius: The Beasts of Battle in 5.1308–49', *Ramus* 15: 1–34.
- (1989) *Orpheus: The Myth of the Poet*. Baltimore and London.
- (1990) *Lucretius on Death and Anxiety: Poetry and Philosophy in De Rerum Natura*. Princeton.
- Segura Ramos, B. (1982) 'Ad Lucr. d.r.n. II, 1173–1174', *Faventia* 4: 97–9.
- Sellar, W. Y. (1897) *The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age: Virgil*, 3rd edition. Oxford.
- Silk, M. (1987) *Homer: The Iliad*. Cambridge.
- Singer, P. (1995) *Animal Liberation*, 2nd edition. London.
- Skutsch, O. (1985) *The Annals of Q. Ennius*. Oxford.
- Smith, P. L. (1965) 'Lentus in umbra: A Symbolic Pattern in Vergil's *Eclogues*', *Phoenix* 19: 298–304.
- Solmsen, F. (1947) 'Eratosthenes' *Erigone*: A Reconstruction', *TAPA* 78: 252–75.
- (1966) 'Aratus on the Maiden and the Golden Age', *Hermes* 94: 124–8.
- Sorabji, R. (1993) *Animal Minds and Human Morals: The Origins of the Western Debate*. London.
- Spies, A. (1930) 'Militat omnis amans. Ein Beitrag zur Bildersprache der antiken Erotik', Diss. Tübingen (repr. 1978).
- Stehle, E. M. (1974) 'Virgil's *Georgics*: The Threat of Sloth', *TAPA* 104: 347–69.
- Summers, K. (1995) 'Lucretius and the Epicurean Tradition of Piety', *CPh* 90: 32–57.

- Tarrant, R. J. (1997) 'Poetry and Power: Virgil's Poetry in Contemporary Context'. In *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil*, ed. C. Martindale. Cambridge: 169–87.
- Taylor, M. E. (1955) 'Primitivism in Virgil', *AJP* 76: 261–78.
- Thomas, E. (1964) 'Variations on a Military Theme in Ovid's *Amores*', *G&R* 11: 151–65.
- Thomas, R. F. (1979) 'Theocritus, Calvus and *Eclogue* 6', *CPh* 74: 337–9.
- (1982a) *Lands and Peoples in Roman Poetry: The Ethnographical Tradition*. CPhS Suppl. 7. Cambridge.
- (1982b) 'Gadflies (Virg. *Geo.* 3.146–148)', *HSCP* 86: 81–5.
- (1983) 'Callimachus, the *Victoria Berenices*, and Roman Poetry', *CQ* 33: 92–113.
- (1986) 'Virgil's *Georgics* and the Art of Reference', *HSCP* 90: 171–98.
- (1988) *Virgil: Georgics*. Cambridge.
- (1991) 'The "Sacrifice" at the End of the *Georgics*, Aristaeus, and Vergilian Closure', *CPh* 86: 211–18.
- (1992) 'The Old Man Revisited: Memory, Reference and Genre in Virg., *Georg.* 4.116–48', *MD* 29: 35–70.
- (1998) 'Virgil's Pindar?'. In *Style and Tradition: Studies in Honor of Wendell Clausen*, edd. P. E. Knox and C. Foss. Stuttgart and Leipzig: 99–120.
- Toynbee, J. M. C. (1973) *Animals in Roman Life and Art*. London.
- Traina, A. (1969) '*Laboranti similis*: storia di un omerismo virgiliano', *Maia* 21: 71–8.
- Van Erp Taalman Kip, A. M. (1994) 'Intertextuality and Theocritus 13'. In *Modern Critical Theory and Classical Literature*, edd. I. J. F. De Jong and J. P. Sullivan. Mnemosyne Suppl. 130. Leiden: 153–69.
- Van Wees, H. (1992) *Status Warriors: War, Violence and Society in Homer and History*. Amsterdam.
- Vian, F. (1952) 'La guerre des Géants devant les penseurs de l'antiquité', *REG* 65: 1–39.
- Wacht, M. (1991) *Concordantia in Lucretium*. Hildesheim.
- Wardy, R. (1988) 'Lucretius on What Atoms are Not', *CPh* 83: 112–28.
- Warwick, H. H. (1975) *A Vergil Concordance*. Minneapolis.
- Weinstock, S. (1971) *Divus Iulius*. Oxford.
- Wender, D. S. (1969) 'Resurrection in the Fourth *Georgic*', *AJP* 90: 424–36.
- West, D. A. (1969) *The Imagery and Poetry of Lucretius*. Edinburgh.
- (1979) 'Two Plagues: Virgil, *Georgics* 3.478–566 and Lucretius 6.1090–1286'. In *Creative Imitation and Latin Literature*, edd. D. A. West and A. J. Woodman. Cambridge: 71–88.
- Wigodsky, M. (1972) *Virgil and Early Latin Poetry*. Hermes Einzelschr. 24. Wiesbaden.

- Wilhelm, R. M. (1982) 'The Plough-Chariot: Symbol of Order in the *Georgics*', *CJ* 77: 213–30.
- (1986) 'Apollo, Sol and Caesar: Triumvirate of Order', *AugAge* 5: 60–75.
- Wilkinson, L. P. (1963) 'Virgil's Theodicy', *CQ* 13: 75–84.
- (1969) *The Georgics of Virgil: A Critical Survey*. Cambridge.
- (1970) 'Pindar and the Proem to the Third Georgic'. In *Forschungen zur römischen Literatur. Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Karl Büchner*. Wiesbaden: 286–90.
- Williams, R. D. (1979) *Virgil: The Eclogues and Georgics*. New York.
- Wills, J. (1996) *Repetition in Latin Poetry: Figures of Allusion*. Oxford.
- Worton, M. and Still, J. edd. (1990) *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*. Manchester.
- Wright, M. R. (1981) *Empedocles: The Extant Fragments*. New Haven and London.
- Yarnall, J. (1994) *Transformations of Circe: The History of an Enchantress*. Urbana and Chicago.
- Zanker, P. (1988) *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. A. Shapiro. Ann Arbor.

# INDEX OF PASSAGES CITED

AELIAN		162	200 n. 7
<i>Varia Historia</i>		ANTONIUS LIBERALIS	
5.14.2	107 n. 161	35	130 n. 44
AEMILIUS MACER (?)		APOLLODORUS	
fr. 30 Courtney	134 n. 66	1.9.12	127 n. 34
AESCHYLUS		APOLLONIUS (PARADOXOGRAPHUS)	
<i>Agamemnon</i>		<i>Historia Mirabilium</i>	
224-47	104 n. 152	23	200 n. 7
<i>Choephoroi</i>		APOLLONIUS RHODIUS	
613-22	129 n. 40	<i>Argonautica</i>	
1021-4	188 n. 130	2.88-9	96 n. 124
<i>Prometheus Bound</i>		2.500-27	28 n. 31
351	140 n. 84	3.927-39	133 n. 62
367-71	121-2	3.1259-61	262 n. 103
882-4	188 n. 130	4.445	63 n. 18
ALCMAEON		4.597-600	35 n. 54
fr. 1a Diels-Kranz	90 n. 102	4.1280-7	120 n. 14
ALEXANDER OF AETOLIA		ARATUS	
fr. 1 Powell	119 n. 11	<i>Phaenomena</i>	
ALEXANDER OF APHRODISIAS		2	36
<i>in Meteorologica</i>		5-13	84 n. 84
3.4	123 n. 22	5-7	157 n. 40
ANAXAGORAS		10-12	68 n. 32
fr. 21b Diels-Kranz	90 n. 102	13	156
<i>Anthologia Palatina</i>		16-18	25 n. 16, 42 n. 71
4.1	182 n. 114	45-8	83
5.19.5-6	226 n. 94	108-13	38, 156
7.725	73 n. 57	113	160 n. 45
11.1	73 n. 57	115-36	38
11.12	73 n. 57	130-2	41 n. 70, 247 n. 60
ANTIGONUS OF CARYSTUS		132	107 n. 161
19	229 n. 103	135-6	156
152	200 n. 7	265-6	68 n. 32



408-35	68 n. 32	AUGUSTUS	
462-544	83	<i>Res Gestae</i>	
732	68 n. 32	13	244 n. 47
741-3	68 n. 32, 84 n. 84	34.1	244 n. 47
761	157	AULUS GELLIUS	
768-72	68 n. 32	<i>Noctes Atticae</i>	
948	129	3.10.11	35 n. 51
949-53	130 n. 47		
949	130		
963	133 n. 61	BACCHYLIDES	
1003	130 n. 47	5.177	188 n. 129
1153-4	84 n. 84	11.106-9	127 n. 34
ARCHILOCHUS			
fr. 122 West	226 n. 94	CAESAR	
ARISTOPHANES		<i>De Bello Gallico</i>	
<i>Clouds</i>		2.14	241 n. 38
346-50	123 n. 22	CALLIMACHUS	
<i>Frogs</i>		<i>Aetia</i>	
211	129 n. 43	fr. 1 Pfeiffer	12 n. 27
<i>Pax</i>		fr. 1.25-8	14 n. 34, 188 n. 129, 190
1075-86	222 n. 78	fr. 75	28 n. 31
ARISTOTLE		fr. 113	128 n. 38
<i>De Anima</i>		<i>Victoria Berenices</i>	12
414b 18-19	90 n. 102	<i>Epigrams</i>	
433a 12	90 n. 102	27.4	153 n. 30
<i>Historia Animalium</i>		28	12 n. 27
488b 12-27	92 n. 111	<i>Hecale</i>	
488b 24-6	90 n. 102	fr. 9 Hollis	128 n. 38
571b-572a	222 n. 76	fr. 25	130 n. 49
575a	263 n. 109	frs. 70-4	130-3
<i>Nichomachean Ethics</i>		fr. 90	129 n. 40
1098a 3-4	90 n. 102	<i>Hymns</i>	
<i>De Partibus Animalium</i>		2.47-9	12 n. 27
641b 7-9	90 n. 102	2.105-12	12 n. 27, 189
686a 27-31	90 n. 102	2.111-12	14 n. 34
<i>De Philosophia</i>		3.233-6	127 n. 34
fr. 11 Rose	203 n. 14	3.12	252 n. 72
fr. 12b	188 n. 130	<i>Iambi</i>	
<i>Politics</i>		fr. 194.82 Pfeiffer	130 n. 49
1253a 7-18	90 n. 102	fragments ( <i>Suppl. Hellenisticum</i> )	
1332b 5	90 n. 102	295	117 n. 5
[ARISTOTLE]		CALPURNIUS SICULUS	
<i>De Mirabilibus Auscultationibus</i>		<i>Eclogues</i>	
102	200 n. 7	2.42.3	212 n. 45
<i>De Mundo</i>		CALVUS	
400b	188 n. 130	fr. 9 Courtney	127 n. 35

## CATO

*De Agricultura**praefatio**praef.* 4

1

2.7

131-2

134

141

## CATULLUS

50

51

62.39-47

63.91

64.399

## CHRYSIPPUS

fr. 649 von Arnim

fr. 1172

fr. 1181

fr. 1183

## CICERO

*Academica*

2.7-8

*Aratea*

18.3

*Pro Caelio*

39-42

*In Catilinam*

4.21

*De Divinatione*

1.12

1.73

1.101

1.118

2.43

2.49

*Ad Familiares*

7.12.1

*De Finibus*

1.30

1.71

2.31-2

2.118

3.63-4

5.95

*Pro Lege Manilia*

29

*De Natura Deorum*

1.1

1.3-4

1.10-12

1.38

1.49

1.54

1.56

1.57-61

2.2

2.5

2.6

2.15

2.43

2.62

2.87

2.130-53

2.156-8

2.159

2.160

2.161

2.168

3.1-4

3.5

3.95

*De Officiis*

1.11-13

1.35

1.49-58

1.62

1.74-8

1.105

1.121

2.15-17

2.26

2.27

2.45 241 n. 35, 241 n. 38, 242 n. 40

2.85 241 n. 35, 241 n. 37

3.22-3

3.27-8

*De Oratore*

2.150

*Philippics*

7.19

144 n. 3

271

271 n. 4

271 n. 2

52 n. 102

104 n. 150

232 n. 2

232 n. 2

271 n. 4

271 n. 1

123 n. 20

120 n. 14

203 n. 14

203 n. 14

52 n. 102

188 n. 130

90 n. 103

87 n. 90

107 n. 161

85 n. 86

62 n. 16

271 n. 2

271 n. 4

112 n. 173, 271 n. 4

271

62 n. 16

241 n. 38

50 n. 94

241 n. 38

241 n. 36

90 n. 103

241 n. 38

62 n. 16

241 n. 38

241 n. 39

241 n. 35, 241 n. 38, 242 n. 40

241 n. 35, 241 n. 37

50 n. 94

50 n. 94

50 n. 94

144 n. 3

244 n. 47

<i>Pro Plancio</i>		6.2.10	243 n. 45
60	241 n. 38	6.6.3	73 n. 57
<i>Prognostica</i>		6.7.2	73 n. 57
fr. 4.1 Soubiran	129 n. 43	6.22.1	262 n. 104
fr. 4.8	130 n. 48	6.23.3	243
<i>Republic</i>		6.24.2	243 n. 45
3.1	162 n. 52	6.27.12-13	262 n. 104
3.35-6	241 n. 39	6.29.4	262 n. 104
5.9	241 n. 37	6.30.9	73 n. 57
<i>De Senectute</i>		9.8.7	266 n. 118
51	38 n. 62	9.9	243
55-61	45 n. 6, 242 n. 43	9.9.3	266 n. 118
59	259 n. 92	9.9.7	266 n. 118
<i>Pro Sestio</i>		11.1.17	243
96-101	241 n. 38	12.2.5-6	243
<i>Tusculans</i>			
<i>praef.</i> 2	145 n. 5	DEMOCRITUS	
1.2	241 n. 35	frs. 17-18 Diels-Kranz	191 n. 139
1.10-11	123 n. 20	fr. 21	191 n. 139
1.19	42 n. 72	DIO CHRYSOSTOM	
1.109-10	241 n. 35, 241 n. 38	6.22	90 n. 105
2.35	144 n. 3	8.20-6	89 n. 100
4.13	165 n. 62	DIODORUS SICULUS	
<i>Verrines</i>		1.13-29	52 n. 102
2.2.7	144 n. 3	4.70.1	73 n. 57
CLAUDIAN		DIOGENES LAERTIUS	
<i>De Consulatu VI Honorii</i>		6.22	90 n. 105
172	35 n. 54	8.20	107 n. 161
COLUMELLA		8.36	103 n. 147
<i>De Re Rustica</i>		10.118	152 n. 28
1. <i>praef.</i> 13-19	243	10.120	104 n. 150, 152 n. 28, 153 n. 29
1. <i>praef.</i> 14	255 n. 82	DIOGENES OF OENOANDA	
1.1.16	29 n. 33	fr. 19.II.12-III.14 Smith	104 n. 150
1.1.18	243	DIONYSIUS OF HALICARNASSUS	
1.4	201 n. 9	1.36-7	215
2.2.7	243 n. 45	DIONYSIUS PERIEGETES	
3.3.6	243 n. 45	<i>Aves</i>	
3.10.9	188 n. 130	2.15	128 n. 38
3.12.3	243 n. 45	DONATUS	
3.21.4	159 n. 92	<i>Vita Vergilii</i>	
4.3.4	243 n. 45	11	194 n. 148
4.14.2	243 n. 45	EMPEDOCLES	
4.24.21	243 n. 45	fr. 17.21-4 Diels-Kranz	134 n. 11
4.29.12	243 n. 45	frs. 27-9	233 n. 7
5.11.12-15	212 n. 45	fr. 105	42 n. 72
6. <i>praef.</i> 7	107 n. 161	fr. 128	103, 134 n. 11

EMPEDOCLES ( <i>cont.</i> )		<i>Hercules Furens</i>	
fr. 137	103-4	947-9	188 n. 130
fr. 139	103	<i>Hippolytus</i>	
ENNIUS		737-41	35 n. 54
<i>Annales</i>		<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>	
312-13 Skutsch	204 n. 15	82-3	188 n. 130
432-4	68 n. 34	<i>Orestes</i>	
483-4	239 n. 29	36	188 n. 130
<i>Epigrams</i>			
18 Vahlen	13	HERACLITUS ('THE ALLEGORIST')	
EPICTETUS		<i>Quaestiones Homericæ</i>	
1.6.32-6	62 n. 16	33	89 n. 101
1.24.1-2	62 n. 16	48-51	83 n. 82
EPICURUS		64-7	54 n. 106
<i>Epistula ad Herodotum</i>		72-3	89 n. 100
43-4	232 n. 2	HERACLITUS OF EPHESUS	
77	203 n. 14	fr. 53 Diels-Kranz	233 n. 6
<i>Epistula ad Menoeceum</i>		HERODOTUS	
123-4	104 n. 150	1.68	35 n. 51
128	147	HESIOD	
133	178	<i>Theogony</i>	
<i>Epistula ad Pythoclem</i>		134	140
86-8	60 n. 7	720	219 n. 69
98	85 n. 85	<i>Works and Days</i>	
99-103	232 n. 2	1	25 n. 16
115-16	85 n. 85, 206 n. 22	11-26	63
<i>Kuriai Doxai</i>		17-20	157 n. 40
2	178	42-6	62
4	178	50	62
11	120 n. 13	91	155
27-8	152 n. 28	109-20	61
<i>Sententiae Vaticanae</i>		117-19	38 n. 61, 155 n. 35
23	152 n. 28	172-3	218 n. 66
27	153 n. 29	176-7	155
78	152 n. 28	184	40 n. 66
<i>fragments</i>		225-37	156
387 Usener	104 n. 150	231	155 n. 35
398	90 n. 104	237	155 n. 35
483	126 n. 31	274-326	155
ERATOSTHENES		299-301	60 n. 8, 160, 252
<i>Hermes</i>		311	62, 155
fr. 16 Powell	82	327-37	70 n. 42
EURIPIDES		382	155
<i>Electra</i>		397-8	155 n. 37
1253	188 n. 130	411-12	155 n. 37
		414	160

457-9	155 n. 37	16.776	233 n. 3
465-78	61, 70 n. 42	18.318-23	222 n. 77
465	252	19.362-3	237 n. 21, 258 n. 89
471-2	155 n. 37	19.392-418	98 n. 130
479-8	261 n. 10	20.61-6	238 n. 22
493-501	155 n. 37	20.226-9	262 n. 105
502-3	155 n. 37	21.257-62	253-4
524	129 n. 42	23.362-72	99 n. 135
568	135 n. 69	<i>Odyssey</i>	
571	129 n. 42	4.567-8	218 n. 66
574-81	155 n. 37	5.291-6	68 n. 34
582-8	70 n. 42	9.233-4	225 n. 90, 266 n. 117
585	106 n. 159	9.319-24	225 n. 90, 266 n. 117
639-40	249 n. 65	9.391-3	237 n. 21
643	168	11.19	118
747	133 n. 62	11.305-20	140
778	129 n. 42	16.216-18	136-7
826-8	11 n. 23, 155 n. 37	19.518-23	135 n. 69, 136
fragments		21.257-62	161 n. 48
132 Merkelbach-West	127	21.295-304	73 n. 57
234	60 n. 6, 117	24.40	233 n. 3
312	135 n. 69	[HOMER]	
HOMER		<i>Batrachomyomachia</i>	
<i>Iliad</i>		7	140 n. 84
2.144-8	262	HORACE	
2.420	112 n. 172	<i>Ars Poetica</i>	
2.459-63	133 n. 61, 237 n. 21	391-3	53, 186
2.484-93	19 n. 4	<i>Epistles</i>	
4.275-9	68 n. 35, 237 n. 21, 260 n. 97	1.2.17-31	89 n. 100
4.422-6	96 n. 124, 263-4	1.2.62-7	102 n. 144
4.442-3	219 n. 69	1.7.44-5	194 n. 147
5.87-92	237	2.1.139-46	74 n. 58, 106 n. 158
5.303-4	35 n. 51	<i>Epodes</i>	
5.522-6	237	7.3-10	242 n. 40
6.146-9	267 n. 122	16.30-4	222 n. 78
6.506-11	237 n. 21	16.34	226 n. 94
8.16	219 n. 69	16.49-50	40 n. 67
10.5-7	267 n. 122	16.51-6	218 n. 66
12.131-4	219	16.51	226 n. 92
12.381-3	35 n. 51	<i>Odes</i>	
15.119-20	98 n. 130	1.2.6-8	226 n. 94
15.187-93	25 n. 18	1.2.21-52	242 n. 40
16.148-54	98 n. 130	1.21.13-16	242 n. 40
16.384-93	69	1.29	242 n. 42
16.765-70	68 n. 35, 237	1.29.10-12	208 n. 27
16.765	68 n. 34	1.34.12-16	204 n. 15

HORACE (*cont.*)

1.35.1-16	204 n. 15
1.35.29-50	242 n. 40
2.6.5-12	194 n. 147
2.6.13-14	181 n. 110
3.4.73	140 n. 84
3.5.53-6	194 n. 147
3.6.33-44	145 n. 6, 242 n. 43
3.18	106 n. 158
3.20.2	222 n. 77
3.24	192 n. 142
3.25	192 n. 142
4.9.32	144 n. 3
<i>Satires</i>	
1.1.114-16	188 n. 130

## HYGINUS

<i>Fabulae</i>	
204	131 n. 55

## IAMBlichus

<i>Vita Pythagorae</i>	
24.108	103 n. 147
120	107 n. 161

## ISIDORE

<i>Etymologies</i>	
11.3.13	140 n. 84

## JUVENAL

6.287-91	144 n. 3
7.197-8	204 n. 15
7.202	132 n. 59
13.57	66 n. 29
15.131-74	90 n. 104

## LIVY

1.29-30	256, 257 n. 87
1.32.12-13	236 n. 16
7.2	74 n. 58
21.46.2	228 n. 102
23.18.10-16	145 n. 5

## LONGUS

<i>Daphnis and Chloe</i>	
2.3	181 n. 107

## LUCAN

5.597-677	68 n. 34
-----------	----------

## LUCIAN

*Dialogi Deorum*

16	134 n. 65
----	-----------

## LUCRETIVS

1.1-49	23, 24, 25, 71, 90-1, 97
1.1-20	176
1.1	13 n. 33
1.2-4	28
1.4	27 n. 28
1.6-9	20 n. 6, 37 n. 58
1.7	27 n. 28
1.8	182 n. 113
1.10-20	79 n. 70, 212 n. 41
1.10-11	59 n. 3
1.15	186 n. 122
1.16	152 n. 28
1.20	96 n. 122, 175
1.24	26
1.28	186 n. 122
1.29-49	27, 234, 238
1.38-43	244 n. 46
1.39	20 n. 6, 152 n. 28
1.40	13 n. 33, 170 n. 73, 261 n. 100
1.44-9	115 n. 3
1.49	104
1.50-53	24
1.51	151 n. 23
1.54-61	20, 24
1.54-5	27 n. 27
1.56-7	37 n. 59
1.62-79	24, 26, 44, 121 n. 16, 232 n. 2, 236, 239, 244 n. 48, 244 n. 51
1.64-5	179
1.66-76	13-14, 179 n. 101
1.67	66 n. 27
1.71	66 n. 27
1.75-9	20 n. 6, 141, 240 n. 31
1.75-7	196, 202
1.76-7	203 n. 12
1.78-9	10
1.80-101	24, 46-7, 104, 109-10
1.81-2	25 n. 15, 26
1.100	239 n. 27
1.102-35	22 n. 12, 24
1.103	236 n. 15, 264 n. 112
1.107	203 n. 12

I.111	150 n. 21, 169 n. 72	I.340	78 n. 68
I.117-19	13, 236, 244 n. 51, 250	I.370-1	26 n. 23, 236 n. 15
I.123	120 n. 14, 208, 230	I.400-17	82 n. 78, 163
I.124	236	I.418	52 n. 101
I.127-35	20	I.442	236 n. 17
I.129	236 n. 17	I.471-82	236 n. 17, 237
I.136-45	13 n. 33, 20 n. 6, 24, 91 n. 108, 93 n. 114, 152-3, 166, 187 n. 127, 264 n. 113	I.486	234 n. 9, 236 n. 15
I.136-7	191 n. 140	I.505	236 n. 17
I.146-8	142 n. 88, 148	I.551-83	203 n. 12
I.150	207	I.557	96 n. 122
I.151-8	151 n. 26	I.562	96 n. 122
I.159-214	176 n. 89, 203 n. 14, 204-6, 207, 209	I.584-98	202
I.159-66	213-14	I.584	203 n. 12
I.160	31, 211 n. 27	I.586	236 n. 17, 257 n. 88
I.161-73	22 n. 11	I.593	234 n. 9, 236 n. 15
I.161-22	23 n. 82, 226	I.595-6	203 n. 12
I.163	78 n. 68	I.624	236 n. 15
I.165-6	87, 117 n. 5, 215	I.634	236 n. 17
I.174-9	22 n. 11	I.635-920	233
I.181	217	I.638	236 n. 15
I.188-90	123 n. 21	I.645-64	85 n. 85
I.188	124	I.659	26 n. 23
I.192-5	22 n. 11	I.711	26 n. 23
I.199-203	124, 140, 204 n. 16, 220	I.722-5	121-2
I.202	236 n. 15	I.736-9	121 n. 17
I.208-14	22 n. 11, 64 n. 24	I.741	236 n. 15, 238 n. 22
I.212	254 n. 79	I.780	234 n. 9
I.213	154 n. 31	I.803-11	72
I.214	210	I.812-16	224 n. 84
I.227-31	22 n. 11	I.856	234 n. 9, 236 n. 15
I.250-64	21-2, 49 n. 93, 60 n. 4, 79-80, 212 n. 41, 216-17	I.884	120 n. 14
I.250-1	71, 216 n. 59	I.922-30	42 n. 71, 45 n. 80, 74, 264 n. 113
I.252-61	22 n. 11	I.923	250 n. 66
I.257-9	40-1	I.926-50	114 n. 2, 186, 191-2, 244 n. 51, 249-50
I.263-4	41, 96, 117 n. 6, 177 n. 96, 221 n. 71	I.926-7	236
I.271-6	68 n. 33, 68 n. 35	I.927-8	42 n. 72, 170 n. 73
I.272	262 n. 106	I.928	182 n. 113
I.280-94	120 n. 14, 237	I.932	67 n. 31
I.313-14	59 n. 3	I.933-50	93 n. 114
I.328	236 n. 17	I.934	186 n. 122
I.332	26 n. 23	I.947	182 n. 113
		I.951	52 n. 101
		I.955	236 n. 17
		I.968-83	236 n. 16

LUCRETIVS ( <i>cont.</i> )		2.203-9	120 n. 14
1.975-6	236 n. 15	2.205	234 n. 9
1.992	236 n. 17	2.229	26 n. 23
1.996-8	172 n. 80, 240 n. 32	2.242	236 n. 17
1.999	236 n. 17	2.244-93	203 n. 13
1.1021-8	86 n. 88, 203, 240 n. 32	2.257-8	152 n. 28
1.1042-8	234 n. 9	2.263-5	91, 99 n. 135, 262 n. 102
1.1052-82	118	2.300-2	257 n. 88
1.1082	236 n. 15	2.302	202 n. 10, 236 n. 17
1.1102-13	21, 22	2.317-32	234-5, 257-9, 240 n. 33,
1.1114-17	21 n. 8		265 n. 114
2.1-61	20 n. 6	2.325-7	237 n. 21
2.1-19	26, 170 n. 73, 182 n. 112, 187,	2.326	258 n. 89
	235, 240 n. 33	2.333-80	204 n. 16
2.1-4	26	2.335	214
2.2	149 n. 15, 161 n. 50	2.342-80	204 n. 16, 209, 214
2.5-6	239 n. 28, 259 n. 92	2.342-6	214 n. 50, 224
2.7-8	39	2.352-66	46-7, 104-5, 110 n. 169,
2.9-19	27 n. 25, 143, 147, 172 n. 79,		136-7
	240 n. 32	2.398-9	182 n. 113
2.12	149 n. 15	2.409	234 n. 9
2.19	150 n. 17	2.443	204 n. 16
2.24-9	39, 47	2.447-8	234 n. 9
2.29-32	166	2.465	60 n. 7
2.33	182 n. 113	2.478-521	203 n. 12, 204
2.40-9	182 n. 112	2.504	182 n. 113
2.46-8	150 n. 17, 166 n. 63	2.532-40	215 n. 52
2.47-54	147, 150, 239	2.569-80	22, 49 n. 93, 234
2.48-9	150 n. 18, 255 n. 82	2.573	236 n. 17
2.53	151 n. 26, 166 n. 63	2.589-99	79 n. 70, 212 n. 41, 216-17
2.56-8	150, 169	2.600-60	216-17, 250 n. 67
2.59-61	148	2.600	7, 126
2.62-6	20	2.605	236 n. 15
2.67-79	22, 49 n. 93	2.621	255 n. 82
2.75-9	204, 246 n. 56	2.629-30	255 n. 82
2.80-141	232 n. 2, 240 n. 32	2.623	150 n. 18
2.81	22	2.644-54	117 n. 6
2.82	26 n. 23	2.648	31
2.95	172 n. 80	2.650	170 n. 74
2.97	253 n. 73	2.651	104
2.112-41	268	2.652-4	71 n. 45
2.118-20	234 n. 8	2.655-60	85 n. 86
2.123-4	259	2.662	261
2.142-9	22	2.677-9	236
2.166	236 n. 17	2.700-17	204 n. 16, 224 n. 84
2.167-74	22	2.700-6	117 n. 5, 124, 223 n. 82



2.705-6	139 n. 80	3.14-27	118
2.707	124	3.14-15	93 n. 114
2.718-19	202 n. 10	3.17	236 n. 16
2.730-1	149 n. 15, 151	3.18	162 n. 53, 172 n. 79
2.748	236 n. 15	3.22	20 n. 6
2.794	234 n. 9	3.25-7	8 n. 20
2.817-25	124, 132	3.27	236 n. 16
2.822-3	222 n. 82	3.28-30	198
2.869	26 n. 23	3.31-93	20
2.871-85	204 n. 15	3.31-3	204 n. 16
2.871-3	210 n. 36	3.37-40	10, 150
2.875-8	231	3.37	148, 150 n. 18
2.928-9	210 n. 36	3.41	150 n. 21, 169 n. 72
2.954-9	234 n. 9	3.48-9	40 n. 66
2.955-6	236 n. 15	3.59-86	31 n. 44, 40
2.963-72	147 n. 13, 151 n. 25	3.59-78	27 n. 25, 65 n. 26, 239
2.991-1022	204 n. 15	3.59-64	148
2.991-8	60 n. 4, 71, 79 n. 70, 117 n. 6, 212 n. 41, 216-17	3.60	177, 262 n. 102
2.993	216 n. 59	3.62	149 n. 15
2.999-1003	78	3.82	148, 150 n. 17, 151 n. 26
2.1023-1174	21, 22	3.88-90	150, 169
2.1023-47	199	3.91-3	148, 151 n. 26
2.1042-3	236 n. 15	3.105	26 n. 23
2.1058-63	86 n. 88, 203	3.116	149, 151 n. 25
2.1069	236 n. 17	3.141	150 n. 19, 151 n. 25
2.1077-83	214 n. 50	3.152	150 n. 19
2.1081-3	224	3.176	147 n. 13
2.1087-9	203 n. 12	3.211	172 n. 79
2.1090-2	240 n. 30	3.294-8	121 n. 15
2.1105-74	115 n. 4	3.296-307	91-2, 123 n. 21
2.1116-17	37 n. 59, 203 n. 12, 204	3.316-18	214
2.1129	236 n. 15	3.319-22	152
2.1130	204	3.322	92
2.1142-5	234 n. 9	3.366	147 n. 13
2.1150-74	60 n. 4, 79, 153-4, 206	3.416	202 n. 10, 236 n. 17, 257 n. 88
2.1157-63	64-5	3.417	22 n. 10
2.1165	149	3.419-20	151
2.1173-4	82 n. 78, 163 n. 55	3.419	149 n. 15, 164
3.1-2	20 n. 6, 21, 36 n. 55, 66 n. 27	3.445-58	22 n. 10
3.3	26, 236	3.461	150, 162 n. 51
3.6	136 n. 71	3.507	147 n. 13
3.9-12	37	3.523-5	236 n. 15
3.9	30 n. 37, 66 n. 27	3.618-19	205 n. 17
3.11	182 n. 113	3.642-56	239
3.12-13	20 n. 6	3.670-783	22 n. 10
		3.687	202 n. 10

LUCRETIIUS (*cont.*)

			244 n. 51
3.719-21	210 n. 36	4.1	25 n. 16
3.733	147 n. 13	4.2-3	170 n. 73
3.741-53	93, 222 n. 78, 223-4, 226	4.3	182 n. 113
3.746-7	204 n. 16	4.7	67 n. 31
3.773	150 n. 18	4.8-25	93 n. 114
3.785	223 n. 82, 226	4.9	186 n. 122
3.826	150	4.22	182 n. 113
3.830	177 n. 94	4.26-45	20
3.832-42	237	4.26-8	204 n. 16
3.866	150 n. 21, 169 n. 72	4.35-45	22, 120 n. 14
3.893	256 n. 86	4.129-40	123
3.903	150 n. 19	4.138-9	140 n. 82
3.910	172 n. 79	4.173	165 n. 60
3.938-43	151, 172	4.227	172
3.939	172 n. 79	4.337-52	234 n. 9
3.945	204	4.454	172 n. 79
3.948	220 n. 70, 236 n. 15	4.481	236 n. 15
3.964-71	49, 111, 177	4.488	236 n. 15
3.965	96 n. 122	4.489-95	204 n. 16
3.966	26 n. 22	4.547-8	91
3.970-1	22	4.580-94	11, 30, 113, 120 n. 14, 126 n.
3.978-1023	124 n. 24, 149		32, 221 n. 75
3.982	150	4.638-41	91
3.992-4	150	4.678-83	91
3.996	40 n. 66, 246 n. 56	4.710-21	91
3.997	236 n. 15	4.711	133 n. 61
3.998	240	4.713	238 n. 22
3.999	149 n. 15	4.732-48	123
3.1014-23	150 n. 20	4.733-4	22
3.1022	149 n. 14, 150 n. 18	4.759-67	120 n. 14
3.1025-44	237	4.760-1	22
3.1036	186 n. 122	4.824	26 n. 23
3.1038	172 n. 79	4.848	172 n. 79
3.1042-4	26, 36 n. 55	4.880	52 n. 101
3.1049-51	150 n. 16	4.907	172 n. 79
3.1050-2	151 n. 26	4.908	151 n. 24
3.1051	150	4.914	236 n. 15
3.1052	26 n. 23	4.920-4	22
3.1057-67	172 n. 79, 240 n. 32	4.958	149 n. 15
3.1068-72	9-10	4.962-1036	91, 153 n. 30
3.1070	56 n. 114, 178 n. 99	4.967-8	182 n. 112, 239
3.1071-2	151 n. 26, 163	4.991	172 n. 79
3.1078	203 n. 12	4.1013-15	239
3.1090-4	21 n. 9	4.1036-1120	234 n. 9
4.1-25	11, 14, 20 n. 6, 114 n. 2, 186,	4.1056-8	97 n. 126

4.1058-1287	90-1, 97	5.97-9	264 n. 113
4.1058	37 n. 59	5.99	236 n. 15, 264 n. 112
4.1060	149, 150	5.102	26 n. 23
4.1067	149, 150	5.109	236 n. 15
4.1068	75 n. 61	5.110-45	71 n. 45
4.1084-5	175	5.110-13	122 n. 17
4.1099	149, 161 n. 50, 174 n. 87	5.113-21	121 n. 16
4.1107	176 n. 89	5.114	67 n. 31
4.1119	236 n. 15	5.120	141
4.1121	149, 175 n. 88	5.129	223 n. 82, 226
4.1133-4	175 n. 88, 182 n. 113	5.142	59 n. 3
4.1192-1207	91 n. 106	5.168	172 n. 79
4.1201-2	175 n. 88	5.186	209 n. 33
4.1209-10	234 n. 8	5.194	236 n. 17
4.1210	236 n. 15	5.195-234	68 n. 36, 79, 81-3, 116
4.1236-8	105 n. 155	5.206-17	59 n. 3, 64-5, 153-4, 163 n.
4.1263	175 n. 88		55, 169, 206, 234 n. 20, 257
4.1269-73	175-6	5.206	164
4.1285	236 n. 15	5.209	160 n. 46
4.1286-7	21 n. 9	5.211	254
5.1-12	198	5.212	210
5.8	26	5.213	149 n. 15, 163-4
5.9	66 n. 27	5.215	60 n. 7
5.10-12	20 n. 6, 26, 66 n. 27	5.233-4	65 n. 26
5.14-21	26, 29, 66 n. 29, 221 n. 75	5.235-508	22
5.20-1	244 n. 48	5.252	60 n. 7
5.26	126 n. 32	5.266	262 n. 106
5.30	98, 139, 261	5.273	52 n. 101
5.33	7, 126	5.306-17	82 n. 78
5.43-51	236 n. 14, 239	5.306	236 n. 15
5.45-6	150 n. 17, 151 n. 26, 162	5.310	202 n. 10, 236 n. 17, 357
5.49-51	240 n. 31		n. 88
5.50	93, 151 n. 26, 255 n. 82	5.343	236 n. 15
5.54	20 n. 6	5.380-95	234 n. 8
5.55-90	20	5.388	262 n. 106
5.55	26 n. 23	5.389	60 n. 7
5.56-7	202 n. 10	5.394-5	261
5.58	202 n. 10	5.405-8	114
5.73	150 n. 18	5.405	7, 126
5.78-90	120 n. 13	5.411-15	117 n. 5
5.79	240 n. 30	5.416-508	22
5.82-90	142 n. 88, 196-7, 203	5.419-31	86 n. 88, 203
5.82	172 n. 79	5.436-42	234 n. 8
5.84	236 n. 17	5.487-8	60 n. 7, 262 n. 106
5.89-90	203 n. 12	5.650-9	119-20
5.97-109	199 n. 4	5.656-79	84 n. 84, 203 n. 14

LUCRETIVS ( <i>cont.</i> )		5.983	172 n. 79
5.680-704	42 n. 71	5.987	96 n. 124
5.727-30	236 n. 15	5.999-1010	88 n. 95, 182 n. 112, 239, 249
5.731-50	84 n. 84, 203 n. 14	5.1006	65 n. 26
5.735	236 n. 15, 264 n. 112	5.1033-40	92-3
5.737-40	72, 120 n. 12	5.1058	204 n. 16
5.741-2	251 n. 70	5.1061	151 n. 25
5.751-70	120 n. 14	5.1074-5	237 n. 21
5.751	42 n. 71	5.1076	174 n. 87, 261, 263 n. 108
5.753-5	36 n. 55	5.1078-82	237 n. 21
5.780-820	71-2, 211-12	5.1078	133 n. 61
5.781-7	212 n. 40	5.1081-6	85 n. 85, 132-3
5.783-1457	22	5.1091-1104	63 n. 21, 114-15
5.783-805	117	5.1104	236 n. 15
5.791-2	204 n. 16	5.1105-60	31 n. 44, 249
5.818-19	219	5.1120-42	27 n. 25, 190
5.821-5	25, 79 n. 70, 212 n. 41	5.1129-30	172 n. 79, 238-9
5.826-36	60 n. 4, 81 n. 73, 204 n. 15	5.1143-60	171 n. 77
5.826	203 n. 12	5.1151	149 n. 14, 150 n. 20
5.834-6	212	5.1161-1240	113, 197-8
5.840	230	5.1165-7	67 n. 31, 70 n. 42
5.862-3	251 n. 70	5.1183-7	10
5.865-70	93-4, 101, 223 n. 83	5.1185	163
5.869	154 n. 33, 173 n. 83	5.1191	120 n. 14
5.878-924	209	5.1198-1203	105
5.878-89	123	5.1207-11	151 n. 26
5.883-906	223 n. 82	5.1208	178-9
5.886-7	262 n. 102	5.1211	179 n. 101
5.898-900	224	5.1213	203 n. 12
5.901-6	139-40, 261 n. 101	5.1218-35	69 n. 40, 165
5.911-12	217-18	5.1226-32	182 n. 112, 239
5.913-15	140	5.1233-5	204, 246 n. 56
5.917	29, 171 n. 77	5.1241-1378	32-3
5.920-4	123 n. 21, 211	5.1241-96	249
5.923-4	202 n. 10, 206	5.1250-1	63 n. 21
5.925-1010	81 n. 73, 171-2	5.1252-7	60 n. 7, 217-18
5.925-6	22, 117, 206	5.1266-8	63 n. 21
5.933	30	5.1271	236 n. 15
5.934	66 n. 29	5.1272	149 n. 15, 154 n. 31
5.937-8	40 n. 67, 88 n. 95	5.1281-1349	239, 255 n. 82
5.939-42	66 n. 29, 96 n. 124	5.1289-96	30, 245
5.944	177, 262 n. 102	5.1295	66 n. 29
5.965	66 n. 29	5.1297-1307	249, 261
5.970-2	96 n. 124	5.1304	259 n. 92
5.980-1	36 n. 55	5.1308-49	94
5.982	150 n. 16		

5.1321	236 n. 15	6.58	172 n. 79
5.1345	209	6.60	236 n. 17
5.1359	149 n. 15, 154 n. 31	6.65-6	203 n. 12
5.1361-78	63 n. 21, 66, 186 n. 122, 209-10	6.67	26 n. 23
5.1361-9	30, 86 n. 89	6.73	170, 172 n. 79, 261 n. 100
5.1362	29 n. 34, 209	6.89	261 n. 98
5.1367-9	52 n. 102, 211 n. 38, 257	6.92-5	26
5.1370-8	212 n. 41	6.94	172 n. 79
5.1376-8	80, 259 n. 92	6.96-378	232 n. 2
5.1379-1404	30 n. 40, 70 n. 42, 74 n. 58	6.96-101	68 n. 33, 68 n. 35
5.1416	29, 66 n. 29	6.97-120	267 n. 121
5.1423-35	239	6.97-8	234 n. 9, 237
5.1424	253 n. 73	6.100	234 n. 9
5.1430-3	148, 151, 203 n. 12	6.108	260 n. 97
5.1430	149, 161 n. 50	6.116-17	234 n. 9
5.1431	150	6.121-31	199-200
5.1436-42	63 n. 21	6.129	120 n. 14
5.1436-9	28 n. 29, 84 n. 84, 203 n. 14	6.131	260 n. 97
5.1439	236 n. 17	6.132-59	260 n. 97
5.1444	236 n. 14	6.145-59	267 n. 121
5.1452-7	63 n. 21	6.148-9	69, 237 n. 21
5.1452	29, 47 n. 87, 86 n. 89, 210	6.155	120 n. 14
5.1457	204	6.170	260 n. 97
6.1-42	20 n. 6, 47 n. 88	6.186	196 n. 1, 199 n. 5
6.1-6	22, 73 n. 57	6.191-3	234 n. 9, 237
6.1	82, 177, 262 n. 102	6.218	120 n. 14, 150 n. 18, 165 n. 60
6.5	21	6.224	261 n. 98
6.6	93 n. 114	6.247-8	120 n. 14
6.7-8	36	6.253-6	168 n. 33, 68 n. 35, 237 n. 21
6.24-34	21	6.254	165 n. 60
6.24	93 n. 114, 128 n. 36	6.255	234 n. 9
6.25	203 n. 12	6.256-7	260 n. 97
6.27	26 n. 23	6.274-94	267 n. 121
6.32	236 n. 14	6.278	69, 234 n. 9
6.33-4	150	6.288	120 n. 14
6.36-8	150, 169	6.306-8	234 n. 9, 260 n. 97
6.39-41	148	6.328	69, 196 n. 1
6.43-95	20, 150 n. 18	6.329	234 n. 9
6.47	188 n. 129	6.357-78	68 n. 33, 68 n. 35, 72, 234 n. 8
6.48-91	120 n. 13, 151 n. 26, 165	6.365	69
6.55	240 n. 30	6.379-422	69, 117 n. 6
6.58-91	142 n. 88	6.379-86	120
6.58-66	196-7, 203	6.396	149, 161 n. 50
		6.405	262 n. 106

LUCRETIUS ( <i>cont.</i> )		6.962	60 n. 7
6.437	196 n. 1	6.1012	199 n. 5
6.442	260 n. 97	6.1056	197 n. 2, 199 n. 5
6.461	260 n. 97	6.1090-3	178 n. 99
6.489	199 n. 5	6.1117-20	234 n. 9
6.496	31, 118 n. 7	6.1132	75 n. 61
6.498	236 n. 15	6.1138-1286	22-3, 45-8
6.509	118 n. 7	6.1138-43	51, 76, 183 n. 116
6.527-34	197-8	6.1141	229 n. 104
6.535-607	42 n. 71, 120 n. 14	6.1142-3	260 n. 97, 262 n. 106
6.548-56	200 n. 8	6.1145	75 n. 61
6.571	234 n. 9	6.1152	23 n. 14
6.596-600	238 n. 22	6.1158-9	23 n. 14
6.608	196 n. 1, 199 n. 5	6.1168	75 n. 61
6.615	199 n. 5	6.1176	75 n. 61
6.616-22	60 n. 7	6.1178	172 n. 79
6.624-6	200 n. 8	6.1179	23 n. 14, 127, 128 n. 36
6.624	262 n. 106	6.1183	23 n. 14, 150 n. 18, 150 n. 19
6.639-702	120 n. 14	6.1208-14	23 n. 14, 150 n. 18
6.642	261 n. 98	6.1215-22	225
6.645	150 n. 17	6.1222-4	76 n. 63
6.654	197 n. 2, 214 n. 49	6.1230-4	23 n. 14
6.655-64	200 n. 8	6.1235-46	178 n. 100
6.655	214 n. 49	6.1239-42	23 n. 14
6.675-7	214 n. 49, 215 n. 52	6.1240	23 n. 14
6.680-93	121-2	6.1244	147 n. 13
6.691	260 n. 97		
6.692	196 n. 1	MACROBIUS	
6.703-11	60 n. 7	<i>Saturnalia</i>	
6.708	236 n. 15	3.15.8	200 n. 7
6.712-37	229 n. 107	6.2.15	40 n. 66
6.738-839	91, 226	<i>In Somnium Scipionis</i>	
6.749-55	132-3	2.10.6	66 n. 29
6.754	7, 126		
6.755	200 n. 8	MANILIUS	
6.760	236 n. 17	<i>Astronomica</i>	
6.768	200 n. 8	1.61	29 n. 33
6.777	234 n. 9	5.273	38 n. 62
6.830-78	60 n. 7	MARTIAL	
6.861-78	85 n. 85	11.43.8	134 n. 65
6.900-2	200 n. 8	MENANDER	
6.906-7	202 n. 10, 236 n. 17, 257 n. 88	fr. 720 Körte	226 n. 94
6.910	196 n. 1, 199 n. 5	NICANDER	
6.933	172	<i>Theriaca</i>	
6.943	60 n. 7	186	76 n. 63

fragments		2.589-95	131 n. 55
64	131 n. 54	2.593-5	132 n. 57
NONNUS		3.339-510	134 n. 66
<i>Dionysiaca</i>		4.283-4	134 n. 66
3.97-123	133 n. 62	6.318	130 n. 45
3.153-63	134 n. 65	6.339-81	130
38.424-31	35 n. 54	6.669-70	135 n. 69
		8.11-151	128 n. 38
OPPIAN		8.259	130 n. 46
<i>Cynegetica</i>		9.320	130 n. 46
4.265-72	124 n. 25	10.196	134 n. 65
OVID		11.343	130 n. 46
<i>Amores</i>		11.741	131 n. 54
2.6.34	133 n. 61	13.396	134 n. 65
2.10.16-17	76 n. 63	13.547-8	222 n. 77
3.11.16	76 n. 63	13.570	130 n. 46
3.15.18	188 n. 129	15.110-42	107-9, 200 n. 6
<i>Ars Amatoria</i>		15.364-7	229 n. 103
2.233-6	146 n. 11	<i>Remedia Amoris</i>	
2.363	222 n. 78	173	38 n. 62
2.375	222 n. 77	<i>Tristia</i>	
2.669	146 n. 11	1.2.17-32	68 n. 34
<i>Epistulae ex Ponto</i>		1.8.1	208 n. 27
1.5.26	38 n. 62	4.7.11-18	123 n. 20
<i>Fasti</i>			
1.337-456	107-9	PALAEPHATUS	
1.380	111	<i>De Incredibilibus</i>	
1.694	38 n. 62	1.5	73 n. 57
2.191-2	134 n. 64	47	134 n. 65
3.494	76 n. 63	PALLADIUS	
4.413-16	107 n. 161	3.9.11	259 n. 92
<i>Ibis</i>		5.7.1	266 n. 118
586	134 n. 65	5.7.4	266 n. 118
<i>Metamorphoses</i>		PAUSANIAS	
1.76-86	90 n. 103	8.1.6	66 n. 29
1.97-100	242 n. 42	PETRONIUS	
1.107-8	218 n. 66	<i>Satyrice</i>	
1.152	194 n. 146	122	133 n. 62
1.237	130 n. 46	PHILODEMUS	
1.300	226 n. 94	<i>De Morte</i>	
2.81-5	35 n. 54	col. 29.15-17	238 n. 23
2.329-31	35 n. 54	col. 33.9-25	238 n. 23
2.524	134 n. 64	<i>Peri Parrhesias</i>	
2.530	134 n. 64	fr. 87	102 n. 144
2.534-632	131 n. 50	<i>De Pietate</i>	
2.564	132 n. 57	1.765-72 Obbink	104 n. 150

PHILODEMUS ( <i>cont.</i> )		11.53-8	243
<i>De Signis</i>		11.61	266 n. 118
col. 21 De Lacy	204 n. 16	17.78	259 n. 92
cols. 25-6	204 n. 16	17.103-4	212 n. 45
PINDAR		17.120	212 n. 45
<i>Isthmians</i>		18.19	145 n. 7
8.62	188 n. 129	31.12	200 n. 7
<i>Olympians</i>		31.51	200 n. 7
9.43-6	117	36.126	200 n. 7
9.81	188 n. 129	37.201-2	215
<i>Pythians</i>		PLINY THE YOUNGER	
10.65	188 n. 129	<i>Epistulae</i>	
PLATO		8.20.2	229 n. 104
<i>Apology</i>		<i>Panegyricus</i>	
22b-c	191 n. 139	3.4	144 n. 3
<i>Ion</i>		PLUTARCH	
534a-b	191 n. 139	<i>De Esu Carnium</i>	
<i>Laches</i>		997e	103 n. 147
196e-97b	90 n. 102	<i>Quaestiones Conviviales</i>	
<i>Laus</i>		2.6.1	213 n. 46
12.966e	203 n. 14	fragments	
<i>Phaedrus</i>		200	89 n. 100
245a	191 n. 139	PORPHYRY	
246a-57a	188 n. 130	<i>De Abstinentia</i>	
<i>Politicus</i>		2.5-32	103
271e	218 n. 66	4.2	66 n. 29
272a	218 n. 66	PROPERTIUS	
272b-274d	162 n. 52	1.6.23-6	146 n. 12
<i>Republic</i>		2.3.5-8	226 n. 94
413d	102 n. 144	2.4.27	76 n. 63
441a-b	90 n. 102	2.10.2	188 n. 129
PLAUTUS		2.14.23-4	242 n. 42
<i>Asinaria</i>		2.15.33	208 n. 27
99-100	222 n. 94	2.15.34	226 n. 94
PLINY THE ELDER		2.15.41-8	242 n. 42
<i>Natural History</i>		2.17.5-9	146 n. 12
2.224-32	200 n. 7	2.23.7-8	146 n. 11
2.236	200 n. 7	2.24.25-34	146 n. 11
3.40-2	215	2.34.67-8	183
3.62	194 n. 148	3.1	12 n. 26
7.20	73 n. 57	3.1.9-14	188 n. 129
7.73-4	35 n. 51	3.4	242 n. 42
8.102-3	85 n. 86	3.5	242 n. 42
8.180	107 n. 161	3.8.20	76 n. 63
10.30	133 n. 62	3.12.3-6	242 n. 42
11.20-6	243	3.22.17-42	215



3.22.19-22	241 n. 38	2.152-3	216 n. 55
4.1.105	133 n. 62	2.460	38 n. 62
4.1.137-40	146 n. 11	3.431	130 n. 44
4.2.17-18	212 n. 45	SEXTUS EMPIRICUS	
		<i>Adversus Mathematicos</i>	
QUINTILIAN		9.111-12	203 n. 14
8.3.9	259 n. 92	9.127-30	103 n. 147
RHIANUS		SOTION	
fr. 1.13-16	194 n. 146	fr. 3	200 n. 7
SALLUST		SOPHOCLES	
<i>Bellum Catilinae</i>		frs. 581-95 Radt	135 n. 66
2.2	242 n. 42	STATIUS	
2.5	144 n. 3	<i>Silvae</i>	
7.3-6	241 n. 37	3.1	12 n. 26
7.3	241 n. 35	<i>Thebaid</i>	
11-13	242 n. 42	3.506	133 n. 62
12.4	241 n. 38	STRABO	
<i>Bellum Jugurthinum</i>		2.2.1-2	83 n. 82
4.5-6	241 n. 35	6.4.1	215
SENECA		15.1.64	162 n. 52
<i>Agamemnon</i>		SUETONIUS	
465-97	68 n. 34	<i>Divus Iulius</i>	
<i>Dialogi</i>		82	35 n. 54
1.2.5-6	62 n. 16	<i>Domitian</i>	
4.7	62 n. 16	23	133 n. 62
9.7.5	62 n. 16	TACITUS	
<i>Epistulae Morales</i>		<i>Histories</i>	
24.18	123 n. 20	2.62.1	144 n. 3
82.16	123 n. 20	2.93.1	145 n. 5
90.7-26	62 n. 16	4.47.3	204 n. 15
95.52	50 n. 94	5.6.3	29 n. 33
124.20-1	90 n. 103	THEMISTIUS	
<i>Hercules Furens</i>		<i>in Parva Naturalia</i>	
433	62 n. 16	37.29-31 Wendland	123 n. 22
<i>Phaedra</i>		THEOCRITUS	
572	222 n. 78	1.123-4	30 n. 39
<i>Quaestiones Naturales</i>		1.132-4	213
2.32.3-4	85 n. 86	1.135	222 n. 78
SERVIUS		4	181 n. 108
<i>in Georgica</i>		5	181 n. 108
<i>praefatio</i>	27 n. 26	7	181 n. 108
1.7	29 n. 34	7.59-60	131 n. 54
1.378	130 n. 44	7.109-14	224 n. 85
1.514	35 n. 53	THEOGNIS	
2.149	216 n. 55	535-8	213 n. 47

THEOPHRASTUS		1.18.7-8	29 n. 33
<i>De Causis Plantarum</i>		1.19.2	29 n. 33
1.1.2	210 n. 36	1.40.1	210 n. 36
1.5	210 n. 36	1.40.2	29 n. 33
1.6.1-10	212 n. 45	1.40.5-6	212 n. 45
<i>Historia Plantarum</i>		2.praef.1-3	243
2.3.2	214 n. 49	2.1.18	263 n. 109
3.1.4-6	210 n. 36	2.1.19	222 n. 76
4	215 n. 52	2.5.4	107 n. 161
THUCYDIDES		2.5.5	229 n. 103
2.47.4	127	2.5.12	263 n. 109
TIBULLUS		2.5.17	262 n. 104
1.1.1-5	242 n. 42	2.7.9	222 n. 76
1.1.11-24	106 n. 158	2.7.11-16	262 n. 104
1.1.51-8	242 n. 42	2.10.1	255 n. 82
1.1.73-8	242 n. 42	3.1.4	243
1.2.33	146 n. 11	3.16	245 n. 44
1.3.47-8	242 n. 42	3.16.4	229 n. 103
1.4.47	146 n. 12	3.16.9	266 n. 118
1.10.7-14	242 n. 42	3.16.10	181 n. 110
1.10.53-68	242 n. 42	VIRGIL	
2.1.1-2	106 n. 158		
2.6.22	38 n. 62	<i>Aeneid</i>	
[TIBULLUS]		1.81-123	68 n. 34
3.4.1-3	76 n. 63	1.205	162 n. 53
3.4.65	146 n. 12	1.263-6	244 n. 48
TIMOTHEUS		1.278-90	241 n. 38
fr. 12 Bergk	162 n. 52	1.430-6	266 n. 118
VALERIUS FLACCUS		1.444	98 n. 127
<i>Argonautica</i>		1.597	146 n. 9
4.294	134 n. 65	1.660	48 n. 90
VARIUS RUFUS		1.673	48 n. 90
<i>De Morte</i>		3.224	107 n. 161
fr. 1 Courtney	246 n. 57	3.388	52 n. 101
VARRO		3.539-40	98 n. 127
<i>De Lingua Latina</i>		3.619-20	219 n. 69
5.76	132 n. 57	3.678	219 n. 69
7.36	120 n. 14	4.2	48 n. 90
<i>De Re Rustica</i>		4.54	48 n. 90
1.1.5-6	24, 27	4.68	48 n. 90
1.2.3-7	215	4.177	219 n. 69
1.4.1-2	259 n. 92	4.300	48 n. 90
1.6	201 n. 9	4.376	48 n. 90
1.7	215 n. 52	4.379-80	151 n. 22
1.7.6	215 n. 54	4.386	62 n. 17
		4.412	62 n. 17, 63 n. 18
		5.63	107 n. 161

6.135	146 n. 9	4.32	248 n. 63
6.273-81	146	4.39	87 n. 92, 218
6.277	65 n. 26, 177 n. 94	4.40	170 n. 74
6.554-6	77 n. 64	5.60-1	46 n. 83, 225-6
6.645-7	53	6.10	190 n. 137
6.851-3	238 n. 25, 241 n. 38	6.48-51	127
6.852	273	8.27-8	213, 222 n. 78
7.46	162 n. 53	8.49	62 n. 17, 63 n. 18
7.64-7	228 n. 102	8.52-6	213
7.175	107 n. 161	9.15	133 n. 62
7.181-6	162 n. 53	10.44	190 n. 137
7.355-6	48 n. 90	10.65-8	224 n. 85
7.421	146 n. 9	10.75-6	161 n. 49
7.456-7	48 n. 90	<i>Georgics</i>	
7.550	48 n. 90	1.1-42	19
7.601-22	162 n. 53	1.1-23	27-31, 124 n. 25
7.623	48 n. 90, 162 n. 53	1.1-5	24
7.674-5	123 n. 22	1.2	19
7.783-92	126 n. 30	1.3	160
8.55	162 n. 53	1.14-15	73 n. 56
8.325	162 n. 53	1.17	160
8.378	146 n. 9	1.21-3	207
8.440	122 n. 18	1.21	11
8.283	107 n. 161	1.23	118 n. 7
9.62	62 n. 17	1.24-42	25-7
10.6-15	242 n. 40	1.26	160
10.727	62 n. 17	1.33	73 n. 56
10.767	219 n. 69	1.39	124 n. 25
11.492-7	98 n. 127	1.41-2	24-5, 160 n. 45
11.512	62 n. 17	1.43-203	59
12.82	98 n. 127	1.43-6	59, 71 n. 46
12.250	62 n. 17	1.45-6	160
12.261	62 n. 17	1.46	101, 160 n. 46
12.331-40	98 n. 130	1.50-63	16, 201-6
12.474	136 n. 71	1.52-3	160
12.715-24	96 n. 124	1.56	202 n. 10
<i>Eclogues</i>		1.60-3	60, 71, 117
1.6	194	1.65	101
1.46-58	181	1.71-110	160-1
1.59-60	226 n. 94	1.79	159
3.60	36 n. 56	1.86-93	60
4.17	241 n. 38	1.95-102	252-3
4.21-2	40, 46 n. 83, 218 n. 66, 225-6,	1.95-6	67
	164 n. 111	1.99	266 n. 119
4.24	218 n. 66, 225-6	1.100-17	61
4.29	170 n. 74, 213 n. 47	1.100-3	207

VIRGIL (*cont.*)

I.104-10	253-4	I.268-75	40, 67, 255
I.118-59	29 n. 35, 59, 61-7, 159, 188, 206, 252	I.268	266 n. 119
I.118-46	8, 16, 39, 161-2, 169 n. 126, 254-5	I.276-86	140-1
I.118	101, 162	I.293	166, 185
I.119	62 n. 17	I.299-10	166
I.121	69 n. 38, 128 n. 36, 162	I.303-4	31 n. 43
I.125-46	18, 124 n. 25, 183, 247 n. 60	I.311-15	71
I.127-8	170 n. 74, 207 n. 24, 218	I.313	168 n. 67
I.129-30	218 n. 66, 226 n. 92	I.316-34	16, 34, 68-70, 71, 86, 117-18, 139, 141, 162, 164-5, 207, 259-60, 267, 269 n. 126
I.133	47 n. 87, 52 n. 102, 128 n. 36	I.325	101
I.138	134	I.328	68, 86 n. 87
I.147	67, 86 n. 87, 108 n. 162, 124 n. 25	I.330-1	101 n. 139
I.148-9	40	I.335-40	164
I.155	255	I.335	260 n. 95
I.158	161 n. 50	I.338-50	67, 72, 106
I.160-8	67, 145 n. 4	I.338	52, 77 n. 66, 112, 273
I.160	255, 268 n. 124	I.351-5	33, 83-6, 116
I.161-3	124 n. 25	I.351	206 n. 21
I.163-6	124 n. 25	I.353	68, 69 n. 38, 81 n. 75, 206
I.168	255 n. 82	I.357	34 n. 48
I.174	188	I.371-3	31 n. 43
I.176-203	81-3	I.377	136 n. 71
I.176-7	163	I.378	129-40
I.181-6	94, 162	I.381-3	130
I.184-5	140	I.383	133 n. 61
I.186	94	I.385	133 n. 61
I.193-203	16, 188, 206	I.388-9	129-33
I.197	163-4	I.390-2	130 n. 49
I.199	164	I.394	83 n. 83, 206 n. 21
I.201-3	140	I.399	129, 131
I.204-350	59	I.401-3	129, 131-2
I.204-7	31 n. 43	I.404-9	128-9
I.210	101, 226 n. 119	I.410-14	94
I.218	73 n. 56	I.415-23	75 n. 61, 84-6, 116, 206
I.220	255, 266 n. 119	I.415	6-7, 133 n. 63
I.229	73 n. 56	I.416	133
I.231-58	16, 81-3, 116, 118-20, 225 n. 87	I.425-6	83 n. 83
I.231	68 n. 32, 83 n. 83	I.432	83 n. 83
I.242-3	8 n. 20	I.439	28 n. 29, 83 n. 83, 206 n. 21
I.246	134	I.446-7	124 n. 25
I.253-4	31 n. 43	I.463	207
		I.464-514	32-6, 207-8, 245
		I.471-3	120-2
		I.477-83	120 n. 14

1.477	230 n. 108	2.155	167 n. 66
1.489-97	267	2.170	268 n. 124
1.489	70, 260	2.176	1
1.493-7	19, 247, 255	2.177-258	87-8, 168
1.494	41	2.194-6	105-6
1.501-2	77 n. 64	2.207-11	54-5, 80 n. 71, 102 n. 141,
1.508	41 n. 69, 255	137, 185, 253 n. 74, 256-7, 266, 273	
1.511	48		n. 9
1.512-14	19, 124 n. 25, 188-9	2.207	268 n. 124
2.1-8	19, 36-7, 44-5, 72-3	2.209	94
2.9-82	86-7, 209-14	2.211	188
2.9	257 n. 88	2.214-16	216 n. 57
2.11	80, 207 n. 24	2.226	52 n. 101
2.23-5	256	2.228	73 n. 54
2.32-4	225	2.240	73 n. 54
2.32	222 n. 79	2.251-3	168 n. 68
2.35-46	185-7	2.275	73 n. 54
2.35	88 n. 94	2.276-87	73 n. 55, 80 n. 71, 168, 256,
2.37	73 n. 54, 168		257-9
2.39	159	2.290-7	219-20
2.41	19, 180 n. 104	2.303-14	139, 219, 260-1
2.47-72	167, 168 n. 68, 188	2.303	260 n. 95
2.47-8	73	2.310-11	167
2.47	80, 207 n. 24	2.311	267
2.49-52	168	2.315-45	216 n. 57
2.51	88 n. 94	2.315-18	167
2.52	186	2.323-45	70-2, 117-18, 219
2.53-6	161 n. 49, 168 n. 68	2.325-8	80 n. 71
2.61-2	159, 167, 185	2.333	168
2.82	207 n. 25, 225 n. 88	2.343-5	219
2.83-108	214-15	2.343	168
2.87	124 n. 25	2.345	80
2.89-108	73, 87, 219 n. 67	2.352-3	216 n. 57, 256
2.109-35	215	2.354-70	256
2.109	87 n. 92, 214, 218	2.354-61	167 n. 66
2.113	73 n. 54	2.356	266 n. 119
2.114	218, 248, 255, 257	2.357	101 n. 139
2.116-39	229 n. 104	2.362-70	73 n. 55, 87 n. 91, 168, 188,
2.136-76	209, 214-19, 248-51		263 n. 9
2.140-54	80	2.362-6	219
2.140-2	139	2.365-6	167 n. 66
2.140	98	2.369	268 n. 124
2.143-4	73, 80 n. 71	2.370	261, 266 n. 119
2.146-7	107 n. 161	2.371-9	167
2.149	224 n. 86	2.372	168
2.153-4	226 n. 92	2.380-96	44, 72, 73 n. 56, 74, 106-9

VIRGIL (*cont.*)

2.381	130 n. 45	3.11	25 n. 16
2.397-419	167 n. 66, 168-9, 180	3.23	106, 107 n. 161
2.399-400	167 n. 66	3.37-9	44
2.401-19	216 n. 57	3.41	19
2.407	168	3.43-5	42 n. 73
2.410	161 n. 49, 168 n. 68	3.50	101 n. 139
2.417	256	3.60	94 n. 117
2.419	167	3.63-71	257 n. 88
2.420	88 n. 94, 169	3.63	94 n. 117
2.423	170	3.64-5	96, 177, 221 n. 71
2.426-57	170-1, 219 n. 67	3.66-8	51, 102, 174, 177, 262 n. 102
2.437-9	170 n. 73, 187	3.70	96 n. 121, 177 n. 96
2.447-8	261 n. 99	3.72-122	94 n. 117
2.454-7	37-8, 44, 72-5, 98, 100 n.	3.72-94	98
	138, 138, 261	3.72	262 n. 104
2.458-74	38-40, 47, 170-3, 232, 247	3.74	159, 173 n. 82
2.460	80	3.75-88	46-7
2.467	64 n. 22, 178	3.77	99 n. 133
2.470	101 n. 139	3.81	100 n. 137
2.473-4	219	3.83-8	262
2.475-94	8-11, 42-3	3.85	139, 251
2.475	25 n. 16	3.89-94	125-7, 262
2.476	191 n. 138	3.90	7
2.483-4	183	3.95-100	98, 101-2, 139 n. 79, 173,
2.485-9	274 n. 10		174, 176, 262 n. 102, 263, 273
2.486	191 n. 138	3.100	99 n. 135, 100 n. 137, 100 n.
2.490-4	14-15, 44, 112, 245, 274		138
2.490	163	3.102	47 n. 86, 99
2.491-2	165, 171, 178	3.103-12	98-9
2.495-540	40-2, 170-3, 246-7	3.112	47 n. 86, 174
2.495-512	143	3.115-17	73 n. 57, 124 n. 25
2.498-9	190 n. 136	3.116	99, 262
2.500-1	80, 88	3.117	267 n. 120
2.503-4	88 n. 95	3.118	94 n. 117, 99 n. 135, 173 n. 82
2.514-26	48	3.119	98, 100 n. 137, 139 n. 79
2.514-15	39, 101, 106, 108 n. 164, 143	3.121-2	99
2.516	39	3.123-56	101 n. 140
2.524-5	80 n. 71	3.124	173 n. 82
2.529	72	3.127	174
2.532-40	19, 81, 107, 219	3.135-7	175-6
2.537	108 n. 162	3.138	173 n. 82
2.541-2	19, 188	3.146-56	126 n. 31, 221
3.1-48	11-15, 19, 43-5, 99, 189-90,	3.149	7
	244-5	3.152-3	7, 125-7
3.3-8	124 n. 25	3.157-86	262
		3.157	173 n. 82

3.160	105, 107 n. 161	3.332-4	87 n. 90
3.163-73	173	3.338	131 n. 54
3.163-5	94	3.339-83	224-5, 265-6
3.167-8	95, 102	3.339-48	255 n. 82
3.174-8	102 n. 144	3.346-7	145 n. 4
3.182	174	3.349-83	102 n. 144
3.193	174 n. 85	3.361-2	229
3.196-201	99, 262	3.384	173 n. 82
3.207-8	99-100	3.386-90	102, 173
3.209-83	263	3.391-3	135
3.209-14	96, 221 n. 72	3.404	173 n. 82
3.209	173 n. 82	3.414-39	216 n. 57
3.210	126 n. 30, 126 n. 31	3.425	168 n. 71
3.215-16	48 n. 90, 139 n. 79	3.431	62 n. 17
3.219-41	96, 176, 259-60	3.440-69	219 n. 72
3.224	251	3.440	178
3.229	174 n. 86	3.454-6	75
3.237-41	263-4	3.457-69	102, 173, 273 n. 9
3.242-83	18, 45, 48, 55 n. 112, 97, 126 n. 31, 176, 190-1, 221-4	3.457-9	75 n. 61
3.242-6	100 n. 138	3.459	139 n. 79
3.242-4	51	3.461-3	102 n. 144
3.242	225 n. 91	3.469	94 n. 117, 102
3.244	139 n. 79, 179 n. 102, 251	3.471	221 n. 74
3.245-68	189 n. 132	3.474-7	48 n. 91
3.245	129 n. 40	3.478-566	18, 45-8, 50, 76-7, 178-9
3.250-4	98 n. 127, 100, 262	3.479	139 n. 79
3.258-63	124 n. 25, 125 n. 26	3.482	139 n. 79
3.258	139 n. 79, 140 n. 81	3.486-93	109-10
3.262	129 n. 40	3.494	41 n. 68
3.264	251	3.505	139 n. 79
3.265	248 n. 61	3.509-14	73 n. 57, 100, 221 n. 72, 262
3.266-8	73 n. 57, 75, 100, 124 n. 25	3.512	139 n. 79
3.270-1	139 n. 79, 140 n. 81	3.520-2	110 n. 169
3.272	71 n. 47	3.525-30	41 n. 68, 56, 95, 108 n. 165, 178
3.274	213 n. 46	3.534-6	125 n. 26
3.280-3	100	3.537-47	189 n. 132, 225-7
3.284-94	45, 99 n. 133, 174 n. 85, 190-2	3.549-50	73 n. 57, 221 n. 72, 227
3.289-90	264	3.549	128 n. 36
3.291-2	55	3.550	98 n. 131, 127-8, 138
3.295-321	101 n. 140, 108 n. 165	3.551-3	227
3.305	173 n. 82	3.564-6	139 n. 79
3.316-17	264 n. 111	4.1-7	19, 44-5, 50, 192, 227-8
3.319	173 n. 82	4.2	19
3.322-38	224, 264	4.6	99 n. 133, 159

VIRGIL ( <i>cont.</i> )		4.197-8	228-9
4.8-50	102 n. 141, 182 n. 114	4.201	50
4.8	266 n. 118	4.203-9	49, 184
4.15-17	135-8	4.204	266 n. 118
4.19	50	4.205	182 n. 114, 193
4.20	50	4.210-14	51, 182 n. 115
4.29	50	4.215	227 n. 99, 228 n. 100
4.37	179, 182	4.217-18	266 n. 118
4.42	228 n. 100	4.219-227	78
4.59-60	228 n. 102, 266 n. 118	4.228-80	182 n. 114
4.60	228 n. 100	4.239-42	102 n. 141
4.61	268	4.239	180, 182
4.67-102	180	4.245	266 n. 118
4.67-87	51, 266-9	4.246	131 n. 54, 134 n. 66
4.86-115	102 n. 141, 273 n. 9	4.251-2	102 n. 143
4.86-7	96, 273-4	4.271	168 n. 71
4.88-90	96	4.287-94	48 n. 91, 229
4.90	261 n. 98, 269 n. 126	4.295-314	110-11
4.103-24	179, 180	4.307	136 n. 71
4.106-15	102 n. 144	4.308-13	230
4.106	159, 269 n. 126	4.309	208 n. 28, 228 n. 100
4.108	266 n. 118	4.311	269 n. 127
4.116-17	180 n. 104, 183, 192	4.312-14	269
	n. 143	4.315-558	45, 50, 51-6, 184-5, 193,
4.125-46	18, 180-3		230-1, 274
4.125	134 n. 65	4.326-32	137 n. 76
4.137	134-5	4.380-6	77 n. 66
4.138	134 n. 65	4.464	167 n. 64, 185
4.147-8	183	4.470	77 n. 66
4.149-209	95 n. 118, 179	4.488	138, 260 n. 95
4.149-52	124 n. 25	4.489	77 n. 66
4.156	179 n. 102, 193	4.492	167 n. 64
4.158-69	266 n. 118	4.510	186
4.158	179 n. 102	4.511-15	135-8
4.159	266 n. 119	4.512	268 n. 124
4.160	134-5	4.520-2	100 n. 138
4.170-80	51	4.535-6	77 n. 66
4.170-5	124 n. 25	4.538-53	260 n. 95
4.173	122 n. 18	4.549-51	110
4.176	259 n. 93, 268 n. 123	4.554	208 n. 28, 228-9
4.178	179 n. 102	4.556	111
4.182	134 n. 66	4.557	228 n. 102
4.184	179 n. 102, 193	4.559-66	45, 55, 183, 244
4.193	266 n. 118	4.560-2	124 n. 25
4.197-209	51	4.561-2	99, 274



[VIRGIL]		fr. 18	162 n. 52
<i>Ciris</i>		XENOPHON	
259-64	129 n. 40	<i>Cyropaedia</i>	
536-7	128 n. 39	8.3.38	38 n. 62
VITRUVIUS		<i>Memorabilia</i>	
6.1.9-11	215	1.3.7	89 n. 100
8.3.21	127 n. 34	1.4.11-14	90 n. 102
		<i>Oeconomicus</i>	
XENOPHANES		4.21	259 n. 92
fr. 1.22 Diels-Kranz	123 n. 20	13.6-9	102 n. 144

## GENERAL INDEX

NOTE: Names of modern scholars are indexed only where mentioned in the main text, or where there is extensive discussion of their work in the notes

- Achilles 253–4  
     horses of 7, 98, 126, 262  
*adynata* 31, 93, 117 n. 5, 123–4, 132, 139  
     n. 80, 140, 204–5, 208 n. 27, 213–14, 215, 218, 220, 222–6, 229  
 Aeetes 98, 249  
*aemulatio* 4  
 Aeschylus 104 n. 152, 121–2  
 aetiology 28–30, 51, 60, 74, 77, 99, 106–9, 129–30, 133, 135, 206, 221  
 ‘aetiology of *labor*’ 8, 16, 18, 39, 59, 61–7, 71, 79, 81, 116, 128 n. 36, 159, 161–2, 248, 252, 254, 265–6  
 Aetna 34, 120–3, 140, 141  
 Ajax 237  
 Alcyone 131 n. 54, 134  
 Allecto 48 n. 90  
 allegory 89, 115, 124, 125–7, 139, 142, 186  
 allusion 2, 3–17  
*amor* 62 n. 17, 146, 274  
     absence of, in the beehive 51, 179 n. 102, 228–9, 266  
     and metamorphosis 124–9, 134–5, 137–8  
     as destructive force 48, 96–100, 111, 139–40, 184, 195, 251  
     in *Georgics* 3 8, 45, 71, 174–7, 179, 188, 221–4, 225, 262–4  
     in Lucretius 21, 90–1, 149, 150, 174–5  
     poetry and 55, 190–2, 265  
 Anchises 273  
 animals 19, 29, 32, 45–8, 51, 52, 56, 88–111, 124–40, 165, 173–9, 184, 186, 190–1, 193, 216, 220–7, 251, 261–6, 270  
     in Lucretius 90–4, 100, 123, 204, 206  
     sacrificial 46, 47, 76–7, 102–12, 136–7, 248  
     *see also* cattle, horses, sheep  
 anthropomorphism 46–7, 76, 94–5, 96, 99, 101–2, 105, 125, 129–34, 176, 228, 263–4  
 Aphrodite 103; *see also* Venus  
 Apollo 19, 75, 130, 190  
 Apollonius Rhodius 19 n. 4, 96 n. 124, 120 n. 14, 262 n. 103  
 Apuleius 89  
 Arachne 131 n. 54, 134 n. 66  
 Aratus 1, 17, 25 n. 16, 36, 38–9, 41, 42, 58–9, 68, 78, 83–4, 107 n. 161, 111–12, 113, 116, 129–34, 153 n. 30, 156–8, 160 n. 45, 162, 205, 247 n. 60, 270, 272, 274  
 Aristaeus 19, 23, 28, 30, 51–6, 57, 73 n. 56, 77, 108 n. 162, 110–11, 137–8, 167 n. 64, 183–4, 193, 230–1, 260 n. 95, 273–4  
 Aristophanes 129 n. 43  
 Aristotle 89–90, 92, 222 n. 76, 263 n. 109

- ataraxia* 38–43, 56, 145, 147, 151, 163,  
170, 172–3, 185, 192, 193, 203, 235,  
240, 244, 246, 270
- Athene 130; *see also* Minerva
- Athens 22–3, 45, 47 n. 88, 73 n. 57, 178,  
182, 183 n. 116
- Augustus, *see* Octavian
- authorial intention 3–6
- Avernus 91, 226
- Bacchus 19, 36–8, 39 n. 64, 44, 50,  
72–5, 77 n. 66, 87, 98 n. 131, 106,  
138, 192 n. 142, 247
- beehive, as paradigm for human society  
49–50, 51, 53, 95, 189, 227, 243, 259  
n. 93, 266–7
- bees 19, 23, 31, 49–51, 56, 77–8, 95–6,  
102 n. 141, 135, 137, 159, 179–85,  
192–3, 195, 227–30, 259, 266–9,  
273–4
- birds 54, 84, 93, 94, 102 n. 141, 109,  
128–34, 135–8, 185, 226, 255, 256
- Bonus Eventus 27–8
- bougonia* 19, 48, 51, 56, 77, 110–11, 184,  
195, 208 n. 28, 228–31, 266, 269
- Buchheit, V. 246 n. 57
- Callimacheanism 15, 28, 44, 153 n. 30,  
186–7, 190, 192, 194, 228
- Callimachus 12–14, 17, 130–3, 153 n.  
30, 189–90, 252 n. 72
- Callisto 134
- Calvus 127 n. 35
- Cato 102, 106 n. 158, 159 n. 44, 242
- cattle 46–7, 56, 76, 93, 94–5, 96,  
101–11, 136–7, 139, 156, 176, 178,  
184–5, 221, 225, 230, 243, 248–50,  
259–60, 262, 263–4, 269
- Cecrops 51, 130
- Centaur 29 n. 36, 36, 73, 74, 88, 98, 99,  
100, 123, 127–8, 139, 171, 261, 262  
n. 102
- cereal crops 52, 159, 160–1, 176, 184,  
252–5
- Ceres 26, 27–30, 60, 66, 67, 70, 72, 74,  
106–7, 123
- Chiron 73 n. 57, 98 n. 131, 127–8, 138,  
227
- Cicero 85 n. 86, 90 n. 103, 112, 129 n.  
43, 130 n. 48, 144 n. 3, 165 n. 62,  
200, 233 n. 2, 241, 271–3
- Cincinnatus 243
- Circe 89, 125
- Clay, J. S. 171 n. 76, 180
- Columella 159 n. 44, 212 n. 45, 243, 255  
n. 82, 259 n. 92
- Conte, G. B. 8, 11, 198
- Corycian gardener 18, 180–3, 193, 195,  
227
- Cotta 112, 271, 273
- Crocus 134 n. 66
- cura* 16, 95, 101, 145–6, 147–51, 158–9,  
160–3, 168, 173, 179, 184, 195
- Curius Dentatus 243
- Cybele 126, 217
- cycle of growth and decay  
in Lucretius 21–4, 40–1, 49, 57, 72,  
115, 231, 234, 269  
in the *Georgics* 23–4, 41, 56, 72, 269
- Cyclopes 51, 123, 225, 266
- Cyllarus 98
- Cynicism 90, 95
- Cyrene 52, 55–6, 77 n. 66, 184, 193,  
230, 260 n. 95
- Daphnis 183, 213
- death  
in Lucretius 21–4, 41, 47–50, 56, 58,  
78, 148, 150–1, 172, 177–8  
in the *Georgics* 48, 49–51, 53, 56, 78,  
102, 110–11, 177–8, 184, 193, 228–9,  
231, 269
- deification  
of Aristaeus 52–3  
of Epicurus 25–7, 36  
of Octavian 19, 25–7, 29, 35, 52–3,  
57, 160, 194
- Democritus 237
- Deucalion 60, 71, 117, 205
- Diomedes 237  
horses of 98, 139, 261
- Dionysius of Halicarnassus 215

- divination 77, 85 n. 86  
dreams 22, 91
- Egypt 51, 229  
Eidothea 54 n. 106  
Empedocles 19 n. 4, 42, 103–5, 109–10, 121, 233–4  
Ennius 11–14, 19 n. 4, 120 n. 14, 208, 230, 236, 249, 257 n. 87  
Ephialtes 141  
Epicureanism 57, 85, 90, 112, 113, 145, 153, 179, 181–2, 185–6, 188, 194, 198–9, 223, 244, 245–6, 252, 258, 270–1  
Epicurus 7, 10, 12–13, 20, 21, 24–7, 29, 30 n. 37, 31, 36, 44, 48, 57, 66 n. 27, 70, 82, 104–5, 118, 121, 128 n. 36, 139, 147, 153 n. 29, 162, 192, 196, 197, 198, 236, 237, 239, 244–5, 254  
Eratosthenes 73 n. 56, 82  
Eridanus 34, 35 n. 54  
Eris 63, 66, 155, 156, 219  
Etruria 42, 247  
Eurydice 53–4, 56, 78, 137–8, 167 n. 64, 184, 193
- Fabricius 243  
Farrell, J. 2 n. 4, 15  
Farrington, B. 2, 3  
Fauns 30, 126 n. 32  
fear, *see metus*  
finales 8, 19, 23, 57, 243–4  
    book 1 32–6, 41, 48, 51, 77 n. 64, 187–8, 194, 195, 207–8, 245, 249–50, 251, 255, 258, 266–7, 268–9  
    book 2 8–11, 38–43, 47–8, 67 n. 31, 101, 106, 107, 143, 171–3, 178, 183, 187–9, 194, 195, 232, 245–7, 250, 252  
    book 3 45–8, 50, 76–7, 100, 125, 127–8, 138–9, 178  
    book 4 45, 48, 50, 51–6, 110–11, 135–8, 183–5, 193, 230–1, 274  
    in Lucretius 20–3, 45–8, 51–2, 97, 153–4, 172, 178
- Flora 27–8
- formulae 7, 126, 168, 178, 199, 223 n. 83, 264  
Fulvius Nobilior 14  
*furor* 45, 48 n. 90, 53, 55 n. 108, 74, 100 n. 138, 126 n. 31, 138, 170, 184, 191–3, 195
- gadfly 7, 125–6, 221  
gardens 1, 179, 182  
giants 121–2, 123–4, 140–1, 204 n. 16, 220  
Glaucus, mares of 73 n. 57, 75, 100, 222, 224  
gods  
    in Lucretius 7, 26, 31, 58, 59, 70, 121, 150, 154, 165, 169, 172, 237–8, 254  
    in the *Aeneid* 77 n. 65, 112 n. 172, 140 n. 85, 151 n. 22, 272  
    in the *Georgics* 7, 19, 27–31, 33–5, 37–8, 39, 43, 48, 50, 52, 57, 58–78, 81–6, 87, 116–23, 164, 168–9, 178, 195, 198, 206–7, 227, 231, 246, 252, 270, 274  
Golden Age 8, 19, 28, 38–42, 46, 61–6, 79–81, 87 n. 92, 103, 107, 108, 116, 124 n. 25, 155–6, 162, 171–2, 182–3, 195, 206–7, 210, 213 n. 47, 218–19, 225, 229, 242, 247–8, 254  
grafting 29 n. 34, 211, 212–14
- hapax legomena* 6–7  
Harris, W. V. 241  
Harrison, E. L. 76 n. 63  
Helicon 11  
Helios 35  
Heracles, *see Hercules*  
Heraclitus ('the allegorist') 54 n. 106, 89  
Heraclitus (of Ephesus) 233  
Hercules 7, 89, 126, 139, 210  
Hermes 89  
Hero 176  
Herodotus 200  
Hesiod 1, 11, 17, 25 n. 16, 38, 58–67, 75, 79, 107, 111, 113, 116–17, 127, 129, 154–8, 166, 184, 205, 219, 272, 274  
    allusions to 27, 60–3, 70, 106, 140, 160–2, 168, 207, 249 n. 65, 252–3

- Hesperides, dragon of 7, 126  
*heuretai* 28–30, 52–3, 66, 67, 77–8, 99,  
 108 n. 162, 111, 115, 124 n. 25  
*hieros gamos* 71, 117  
*hippomanes* 100  
 Homer 17, 19 n. 4, 24, 25 n. 18, 52, 68,  
 76 n. 63, 89, 99 n. 135, 112 n. 172,  
 118, 140, 160–1, 177, 225, 233, 236,  
 237, 242, 266  
 Homeric similes 69, 96 n. 124, 133 n.  
 61, 136–7, 219, 237, 253–4, 260, 262,  
 263, 267 n. 122  
 Horace 186, 192 n. 142  
 horses 29, 46–7, 73, 97–100, 101, 123,  
 125–6, 139–40, 174, 176–7, 221,  
 222–3, 248–51, 261–3, 264, 273  
 Hyacinthus 134 n. 65  
 hyperbole 80, 88, 198, 208, 215–19, 222  
 n. 76  
 Iacchus 67  
 imagery  
   agricultural 33, 175–6, 245, 248–9  
   chariots 19, 35–6, 99, 100, 188–90,  
   194, 269  
   Dionysiac 74, 191, 264  
   fire 48 n. 90, 98–100, 138–40, 176,  
   250–1, 261, 263, 267  
   gigantomachy 121–2, 140–1  
   journey 25 n. 15, 26  
   light and darkness 20, 147–8, 150  
   military 16, 26, 34, 68–9, 101, 160–1,  
   167–8, 232–8, 243, 244–5, 252–69  
   solar 26, 35–6  
   storms 20, 26, 147, 261–2, 263, 267–8  
   triumphal 14, 44, 57  
   *see also* similes  
 intertextuality 4–17, 18, 46, 58, 61–7,  
 71, 81–3, 113, 116, 141–2, 161–2, 249  
 n. 65, 272–4  
*Invidia* 44, 189–90  
 Io 134, 152–7, 221  
 Iphigenia 46, 104, 109  
 Jahn, P. 2  
 Jason 139  
 Jermyn, L. A. S. 129  
 Julius Caesar 33, 35–6, 120, 207  
 Juno 76, 126, 134 n. 64, 221, 273  
 Jupiter 8, 16, 27, 33, 34 n. 48, 41, 61–72,  
 77, 78, 83–6, 99, 107, 116, 117,  
 121–2, 140–1, 143, 161–6, 169, 179,  
 195, 206–7, 210, 247 n. 60, 254, 265,  
 269 n. 126, 270, 272; *see also* Zeus  
 Kristeva, J. 4 n. 10  
*labor* 8, 16, 45, 58–67, 116  
   defined 144–6  
   in Aratus 156–8  
   in Hesiod 61–2, 154–5, 157, 158  
   in Lucretius 143, 147–54, 157, 161,  
   164, 166, 172, 184, 185, 187, 195  
   in Roman ideology 144–7, 157–8,  
   166, 173, 183, 184, 270  
   in the *Georgics* 40, 43, 47, 75, 140,  
   143–4, 158–95, 206, 246, 252, 259,  
   265–6, 270, 273  
 Lapiths 73 n. 57, 88, 99, 219  
 Latona 130  
 Lau, D. 144–5  
*laudes Galli* 229  
*laudes Italiae* 73, 87, 139, 167 n. 66, 209,  
 215–19, 224, 248–51, 265  
 Leander 97, 126, 129, 176, 221  
 Liber 26, 27–30; *see also* Bacchus  
 Libya 224–5, 265  
 Livy 256  
*locus amoenus* 39, 106, 181  
 love, *see amor*  
 Lucretius 1–2, 17  
   agriculture in 29, 32–3, 63–6, 79–83,  
   86 n. 89, 93–4, 153–4, 157, 161, 172,  
   206, 209–11, 254, 257  
   animals in 90–4, 100, 123, 204, 206  
   culture-history in 28–30, 32–3, 63,  
   66, 75, 86, 92–3, 114–16, 204, 210,  
   238–9, 249–50  
   cycle of growth and decay in 21–4,  
   40–1, 49, 57, 72, 115, 231, 234, 269  
   death in 21–4, 41, 47–50, 56, 58, 78,  
   148, 150–1, 172, 177–8

Lucretius (*cont.*)

- formulae in 7, 126, 168, 199, 223 n.  
83, 264
- gods in 7, 26, 31, 58, 59, 70, 121, 150,  
154, 165, 169, 172, 237–8, 254
- labor* in 143, 147–54, 157, 161, 164,  
166, 172, 184, 185, 187, 195
- laws of nature in 84, 86 n. 88, 202–6,  
207, 220, 224, 227
- mirabilia* in 196–201, 207–8, 214 n. 49,  
226
- myth in 7, 51–2, 69, 113–15, 123–4,  
126–7, 141–2, 192, 217, 226
- natura* in 66, 69, 86, 96, 115, 177, 195,  
204, 218, 236, 237, 257, 269
- politics in 26–7, 38–9, 149, 171–2,  
190, 239–40, 245–6
- praise of, in *Georgics* 2 finale 9, 43
- religion in 9–11, 47, 63, 76, 104–5,  
113–14, 140, 165, 178–9, 196–8, 236,  
239
- war in 32–3, 44, 94, 148, 182, 190,  
232–40, 249, 257–9, 267–8
- Luna 27, 135
- Lympha 27–8
- Maecenas 19, 25, 211
- makarismos* 9–11, 14, 42–3, 178, 183,  
189, 245
- Mars 34 n. 48, 48, 152 n. 28, 234, 251,  
258, 268
- horses of 7, 98, 126, 262
- Medes 51
- Melampus 73 n. 57, 127, 227
- Memmius 24–7
- metamorphosis 7–8, 89, 123–38, 140,  
142, 221, 231
- metempsychosis 93, 223
- metus* 9–10, 24, 40, 43–4, 69 n. 40, 70,  
147–51, 154, 158–9, 164–5, 168–9,  
171, 173, 179–80, 183, 195, 196, 199,  
239–40
- Minerva 27–8, 30, 126, 131 n. 54,  
132–3, 134 n. 66; *see also* Athene
- mirabilia* 48, 213 n. 46, 215

- in Lucretius 196–201, 207–8, 214 n.  
49, 226
- in the *Georgics* 46, 198, 207–8,  
218–19, 222–3, 224–5, 229–31
- monsters 7–8, 89, 123–4, 126 n. 32, 128,  
138–42, 204 n. 16, 209, 217, 221,  
224, 230, 250–1
- Muses 11, 14, 19 n. 4, 20, 25 n. 16, 45 n.  
80, 188, 189, 192, 264
- Mynors, R. A. B. 169
- mysteries 9, 43, 67
- myth
- in Lucretius 7, 51–2, 69, 113–15,  
123–4, 126–7, 141–2, 192, 217, 226
- in the *Georgics* 7–8, 60, 113–42,  
205–6, 208, 217, 230–1
- Naples 194
- Narcissus 134 n. 66
- natura* 29 n. 34, 37 n. 59, 66, 69, 86, 88,  
96, 115, 177, 195, 204, 209–10, 218,  
236, 237, 257, 269
- Neikos* 233–4
- Neptune 28–9, 99
- Nicander 1, 125, 131 n. 54, 135 n. 65
- nightingale 54, 135–8
- Nisus 128–9, 131, 134
- Nyctimene 131–2, 134
- nymphs 11, 30, 42 n. 73, 52, 77 n. 66,  
110
- Octavian 12, 19, 24–32, 35–6, 44, 48,  
52–3, 57, 99, 160, 183, 189–90, 194,  
244–5, 248, 251–2, 269, 270, 274
- Odysseus 136, 237
- olives 30, 74, 88, 139, 169–70, 180, 185,  
217, 260, 261
- oppositio in imitando* 4
- optimism 1, 31, 48, 57, 79, 112, 144,  
151, 161, 251
- Orpheus 23, 52–6, 77 n. 66, 100 n. 138,  
111, 135, 137–8, 159, 167 n. 64,  
183–6, 193, 212, 230–1, 260 n. 95, 274
- otium* 38–40, 171, 183, 194, 195, 225,  
244, 252, 265

- Otus 141
- Ovid 35 n. 54, 90 n. 103, 107-9, 111,  
130-2, 134 n. 63, 135 n. 66, 200 n. 6
- Palaephatus 123 n. 20
- Pales 19, 75
- Pan 11, 30, 42 n. 73, 75, 135
- Pandion 51
- Pandora 155
- paradoxography 200-1, 215, 228 n. 100,  
229 n. 103
- Parry, A. 53 n. 105
- Parthenope 194
- Parthians 51, 269
- Pasiphae 127 n. 35
- Pasquali, G. 2
- pastoral 30, 38-9, 42, 55, 106, 161 n. 49,  
181, 183, 194-5, 213, 224-5, 235,  
242, 264-5
- Penelope 136
- Perses 155
- personification 71 n. 45, 87, 119, 134,  
146, 176, 207, 213, 255, 256, 260; *see*  
*also* anthropomorphism
- pessimism 1, 32 n. 45, 79, 144, 244, 254,  
257, 260
- Phaethon 7, 35-6, 114, 126, 194
- Philia* 243-4
- Philippi 34, 120
- Philodemus 153 n. 29
- Philomela 127 n. 35, 135-8
- Philyra 98 n. 131, 125, 127
- Pindar 12-14, 117, 188
- plague 18-19, 21, 22-3, 39, 45-8, 51,  
57, 76-7, 109-10, 112, 125, 127-8,  
138-9, 150 n. 18, 174, 178, 195, 221,  
224-7, 240 n. 33, 260, 262, 273
- Plato 90, 199, 203 n. 14
- Pliny 212 n. 45, 215, 243
- poetry and poetics 8-15, 44-5, 50, 53,  
55, 74, 152-3, 159, 185-95, 235-8,  
244-5, 249-50, 264-5, 274
- politics  
in Lucretius 26-7, 38-9, 149, 171-2,  
190, 239-40, 245-6  
in the *Georgics* 19, 23, 27, 31-2, 35-6,  
38-9, 43-5, 57, 187-95
- polyphony 11, 42 n. 73, 58, 72, 157,  
245, 272
- Porphyry 103
- portents 33-4, 85 n. 86, 120, 207-8,  
248
- praise of spring 70-2, 117, 218-19
- prayer 61, 67, 75-6, 79, 103-4, 184,  
207
- primitivism 28-9, 62, 92, 116
- Procne 135-8
- proems 8, 18-19, 45, 57, 243-4  
book 1 24-32, 207  
book 2 36-8, 44-5, 50, 72-3, 87  
book 3 11-15, 43-5, 99, 106, 189-90,  
194, 228, 244-5  
book 4 50, 192, 228  
in Lucretius 19-23, 24-7, 47, 59, 72,  
93, 115, 118, 126, 143, 147, 148, 166,  
170 n. 73, 171, 175-6, 182, 187, 198,  
235, 239, 246  
'proems in the middle' 11-12, 20
- Proetides 127
- Prometheus 61-2, 115, 121-2, 123, 155  
*pronoia* 58
- Propertius 146 n. 12, 183, 215
- Proteus 53, 54-6, 112, 230-1
- providentialism 36, 58, 65-6, 68, 81-4,  
86-7, 116, 156-7, 162, 205-6, 270,  
272
- Pythagoras 103, 107-9, 200 n. 6
- recusatio* 42
- religion  
in Cicero's *De Natura Deorum* 273  
in Lucretius 9-11, 47, 63, 67 n. 31,  
76, 104-5, 113-14, 140, 165, 178-9,  
196-8, 236, 239, 250 n. 66  
in the *Georgics* 11, 61, 67, 70, 72,  
75-7, 102-3, 105-12, 164-5, 171,  
206-7, 246, 273-4
- remythologization 78, 116-23, 141, 244
- Robigo 27-8
- Romulus and Remus 42, 107, 247

- Ross, D. O. 71, 216, 244
- Sabines 42, 247
- Sallust 241, 242 n. 42
- Saturn 19, 42, 81, 98, 125–7, 140, 171, 216, 247
- Scepticism 271–3
- Schäfer, S. 67 n. 30, 86 n. 87
- Scipio 237
- Scylla 127 n. 35, 128–9, 131, 134
- Scythia 224–5, 229, 265–6
- Sellar, W. Y. 1–3
- Servius 29 n. 34, 35 n. 53, 124 n. 25, 129, 131, 134 n. 66, 135 n. 68, 151 n. 22, 182, 216, 229
- sex, *see amor*
- sheep 93–4, 101–2, 109, 173, 225, 261, 264–5
- Sicily 34
- Silvanus 30, 42 n. 73
- similes 19, 35, 54, 69, 81, 99, 100, 135–8, 140, 219, 237, 253–4, 257–8, 260, 263–4, 267, 269
- Sirens 194
- Siro 194
- Sisyphus 146 n. 12, 149
- Sol 27
- sphragis* 45, 52–6, 99, 183, 194, 244, 252, 260, 269
- Stoicism 58, 62, 65–6, 78, 85, 90, 112, 115, 156–7, 162 n. 52, 203 n. 14, 270–2
- storms 16, 34, 68–71, 117, 139, 162, 164–5, 169, 234, 260, 263, 267–8
- Strabo 215
- Tantalus 146 n. 12, 149
- Tarentum 135 n. 65, 181–3
- Tartarus 26 n. 22, 149, 190, 219
- Telemachus 136
- Tellus 27, 71
- Tereus 137
- thaumata*, *see mirabilia*
- Theocritus 131 n. 54, 213
- Theophrastus 103, 210 n. 36, 212 n. 45, 214 n. 49, 215 n. 52, 229 n. 103
- Thomas, R. F. 2–4, 12 n. 28, 42 n. 73, 43 n. 74, 71, 129, 181 n. 107, 189, 207, 216, 244
- Thucydides 23 n. 14, 46, 51, 127
- Thyrsis 183
- Tisiphone 45 n. 81, 48, 77, 178, 227
- Tityos 149
- Tityrus 55, 181, 183, 194, 195
- trees 52, 53, 74, 86–8, 138, 159, 168, 170, 176, 181, 184, 185–7, 193, 204, 209–15, 219–20, 256, 266; *see also* olives, vines
- tricolon 160, 167
- Triptolemus 28, 30, 67
- Typhoeus 121–3, 141
- Underworld 8 n. 20, 25–6, 118, 124 n. 24, 146, 149, 189, 231; *see also* Tartarus
- Varro 24, 27–8, 159 n. 44, 181 n. 110, 200, 212 n. 45, 215, 222 n. 76, 229 n. 103, 243, 255 n. 82, 262 n. 104, 263 n. 109, 266
- Venus 20, 21 n. 8, 22–3, 24–8, 31, 37, 48, 57, 71, 75, 90–1, 115, 126 n. 30, 152 n. 28, 175–6, 210, 234, 238, 251; *see also* Aphrodite
- vines 52, 73–4, 88, 100, 106, 138, 168–71, 180, 185, 214, 219, 255–9, 261; *see also* wine
- Virgil
- and Aratus 1, 17, 36, 38–9, 41, 42, 58–9, 68, 78, 83, 111–12, 113, 116, 129–34, 158, 162, 205, 270, 272, 274
- and Callimachean poetics 15, 28, 44, 186–7, 190, 192, 194, 228
- and Ennius 11–14, 208 n. 29, 249 n. 65, 257 n. 87
- and Hesiod 1, 11, 17, 38, 58–67, 70, 75, 79, 107, 111, 113, 116–17, 158, 161–2, 205, 249 n. 65, 252–3, 272, 274
- and Homer 17, 24, 25 n. 18, 52, 69, 136–7, 160, 219, 237 n. 20, 253–4, 262–3



- and Octavian 12, 25-7, 44, 57, 183,  
189-90, 194, 244-5, 252, 274
- and Scepticism 271-3
- as Parthenias 194 n. 148
- as pastoral figure 55, 183, 194
- Epicurean studies under Siro 194
- reception of Lucretius 1-4, 23-4,  
26-7, 31-2, 41-3, 49-50, 72, 74,  
79-83, 97, 115-16, 122-5, 141-2,  
153, 158, 172, 191-2, 198, 201, 227,  
232, 258-9, 264-5, 269
- Vitruvius 215
- vituperatio vitis* 37-8, 44, 72-5, 138, 261
- war
- and agriculture 19, 23, 32-5, 245-59,  
268
- and poetry 235-8, 242, 244-5
- and Roman ideology 145, 157, 239,  
240-3
- civil war 33-6, 38, 48, 51, 69-70, 77  
n. 64, 96, 98, 122, 148, 183, 189-90,  
238, 241-2, 243-69
- in agricultural writers 242-3, 257
- in Homer 242
- in Lucretius 32-3, 44, 94, 148, 182,  
190, 232-40, 249, 257-9, 267-8
- in presocratic philosophy 233-4
- in Roman elegy 242
- in the *Georgics* 32-6, 42, 44, 170-1,  
189-90, 194, 232, 243-69, 274
- Octavian as warrior 12, 44, 57, 99,  
183, 189, 194, 244-5, 248, 252, 274
- Peloponnesian War 51
- Punic Wars 237, 239
- Trojan War 237, 239
- see also* imagery, military
- weather signs 33, 59, 68, 84, 116,  
128-34, 164, 206, 207
- Wilkinson, L. P. 1-3
- Wills, J. 6
- wine 72-5, 88, 100, 106, 170, 217, 225,  
261, 262
- Xenophanes 123 n. 20, 162 n. 52
- Xenophon 90
- Xerxes 237
- Zeus 25 n. 16, 25 n. 18, 36, 58, 61-2,  
68, 83, 155-6, 161-2, 237; *see also*  
Jupiter
- zoogony 29, 71, 93, 123, 217-18, 230